adventures of a CHESS MASTER

by

GEORGE KOLTANOWSKI

International Wizard of
Blindfold Chess

ADVENTURES
OF A CHESS MASTER

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Edited by MILTON FINKELSTEIN

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Editor's Foreword

"Well," said Koltanowski, "if I don't do something soon, you're going to win my Queen, and it's awfully difficult to win a game when you're a Queen down!" The onlookers laughed, then quieted as he spoke again. "So, I think I'll play Pawn takes Pawn, which is check, and forces mate in three. Right?"

The old-timer shook his head and glared about him while the audience applauded in that mild manner which the best chess club atmosphere seems to permit. "Yes," he said. "But how do you *do* it?"

Blindfolded, Koltanowski was seated at an empty table in the far corner of the room, his back to his opponents. "It's easy," he replied. "You're obviously using a large-size set of men. It's always easier to play with larger chess pieces!"

There had been eight opponents in all, and the score was now 6 wins for Koltanowski and 2 draws. The exhibition was over, and the usual question period began.

"Why do you play blindfold chess?"

"How can you remember where the pieces are?"

"Will it be good for my game if I try it myself?"

The questions came thick and fast, and Koltanowski ended his replies with the promise he had been making for years. "Some day I'm going to write a book about it, and then I'll at least get an extra half-hour of sleep every night. Do you realize that if I had all the hours I've spent in answering such questions I could visit another fifty chess clubs this year?"

Koltanowski has kept his promise—with more to come. Of the several hundred games he felt certain his friends would want to see, a great number are included in this volume. Of the thousand and one little tales he has to tell, there is here but a representative sample. Yet the dynamic personality of the man will not allow

him to be still. He is on his way again—to Europe, to Venezuela, to Cuba, to Canada and to a hundred other places—always playing chess and always becoming involved in incidents which will make good reading in some future volume of the chess doings of George Koltanowski.

M. F.

Foreword

I first began to plan this book twenty-five years ago, shortly after I found that blindfold chess had become the field to which I was to devote my life. Since then, the book has been started many times, but with every exhibition adding new stories and every year making my life more and more of an unpredictable adventure, each start was followed by a postponement to more peaceful times. Travel, both voluntary and forced, adventure, hardship, illness and war have all left their imprint on the pages of my book. I hope you will find this story of blindfold chess and of one who has succumbed to its lure as interesting as living it has been.

Chess players do not become rich, not by a long shot, but this chess player has been amply repaid in more than mere wealth. This book is in the way of a tribute to the great number of fine friends I have made all over the world, men and women who have found, as I have, that chess transcends all barriers and creates true friendship. That, more than anything else, makes me happy that I become a Wandering Chess Minstrel!

GEORGE KOLTANOWSKI

ADVENTURES
OF A CHESS MASTER

CHAPTER ONE

A Short History of Blindfold Chess

CHESS PLAYERS HAVE ALWAYS EVIDENCED SPECIAL INTEREST IN THE spectacular aspects of the game. The most famous games, the various "immortals," are remembered because their themes and their beautiful conceptions are far beyond the experience and the creative ability of more ordinary players. To most of us, the brilliant combination, with its clearly demonstrated win and its unusual sacrifices, is the pearl of recorded chess treasures. This natural interest in the spectacular is nowhere so well reflected as in the long history of blindfold chess.

The first recorded instance of successful blindfold play occurred in 970 A.D., when a Greek traveler named Joseph Tchelebi astounded the chess players of Tripoli with his unbelievable ability to win without sight of board or men. Tchelebi, we know, had been to India, Persia, and throughout the Near East, and his reputation had moved with him. It is indeed a pity that none of his games have been preserved.

About 300 years later, in 1266, a famous Saracen player named Buzeccia was prevailed upon to visit the city of Florence, Italy. The guest of Count Popoli, Buzeccia entertained and amazed a large and distinguished body of guests by playing three of Italy's finest players simultaneously. Two of the games were conducted by Buzeccia without seeing the positions while the third was played in the usual manner. The Saracen proved true to his reputation—winning two games and drawing the third, to the astonishment and admiration of the audience.

Carrera, in his scarce work on chess printed in 1617 at Militello, Sicily, chronicled the names and quality of several men who excelled at blindfold chess. The best were Mangiolini of Florence, Zerone, Medrano, and Ruy Lopez of Spain, while Leonardo da

Cutri and Paolo Boi were prominent through the frequency of their successful blindfold matches.

I have often taken part in extended discussions of difficult positions arrived at in one tournament or another. Chess masters today have the ability to do this without the use of a board or men and it is indeed rare for one of them to err in his memory of a game he has recently played. One is reminded of the Hungarian and Turkish horsemen of the late Middle Ages who are said to have played one another while riding over the plains and hills of the Balkans. How many times have I done the same while having breakfast?

It would be hardly possible to mention all of the great masters of recent times who were able to play one blindfold game well. It is only normal—and, in my opinion, necessary—that they should all have been able to do so. Although Dr. Emanuel Lasker never gave blindfold exhibitions, I often played him a game in New York during 1938, and can testify that his talent was remarkable. The players at the Havana Chess Club relate that, as a youth, Capablanca often played a single game blindfolded. However, neither of these world champions ever attempted more than one game at a time. Like many other great players, they believed it would harm their over-the-board play if they were to play any great number of blindfold games simultaneously. In this, I feel, they were quite wrong! Can anyone support the position that Alekhine, Reti, or Pillsbury suffered an impairment of chess ability because of their blindfold play?

The playing of a number of simultaneous games by a blindfold expert seems to be a development of the past hundred years, the same years which have witnessed the rise of chess and chess players to the position they occupy today. However, it is common to trace the modern interest in simultaneous blindfold play to the French master Philidor. André Danican Philidor, born in a little town near Paris in 1726, died in London eighty years later. His long sojourn in England and his ability to teach chess have left a deep impression on the game. Unfortunately, we remember him today mainly for his remark that "the pawn is the soul of chess," and for that checkmate with a knight called "Philidor's Legacy."

His compatriots remembered him for another reason. An article

in the French Encyclopedia of 1790, reminiscing on chess in Paris, remarks:

"We had in Paris a young man of 18, who played two games of chess at the same time, without seeing the board, and beat both opponents. Each of these was a first-rate player, but the young man could give either of them the advantage of a Knight without seeing the board. The young man was M. Philidor, the son of a musician of repute; he himself is a great musician. This is among the most extraordinary examples of strength of memory and imagination."

What would the Encyclopedia say today?

The first master to develop blindfold chess to any great extent was an American, Louis Paulsen. Paulsen, the chief rival in the United States of the great Paul Morphy, played blindfold chess for many years, achieving the record of 10 simultaneous games in Chicago in 1857. Since then, every few years has seen another attempt to break what soon became a series of recognized world records. Here is a list of the successful attempts:

PLAYER	NO. OF BOARDS	YEAR	PLACE
P. Morphy	8	1858	New Orleans
J. H. Zuckertort	16	1876	London
H. N. Pillsbury	22	1901	Moscow
R. Reti	24	1919	Haarlem
G. Breyer	25	1921	Kaschau
A. Alekhine	26	1925	New York
A. Alekhine	28	1925	Paris
R. Reti	29	1925	São Paulo
G. Koltanowski	30	1931	Antwerp
A. Alekhine	32	1933	Chicago
G. Koltanowski	34	1937	Edinburgh
M. Najdorf (claimed)	45	1946	São Paulo

The scores made by blindfold experts may be expected to attain 75 per cent of the maximum. How do they accomplish this? I have been searching for the answer to this question throughout my whole chess career and can only report that every blindfold player develops his own technique of retaining positions in his mind. One memorizes all of the moves made in each game; another has a photographic mind; a third insists that he himself doesn't know how he can manage to do as well as he does.

Blackburne, one of the greatest of the blindfold masters, insisted that he visualized the actual shapes of the pieces on an imagined chessboard. Alekhine, on the other hand, played with assorted symbols representing the pieces and positions in his mind. Pillsbury must have utilized the photographic method, since he used to break off in the middle of an exhibition, call off all the positions without hesitation (most experts today make this part of their display), perform some card tricks, tell a few stories, and then take up the games again.

Now, let us go back to the past and see at closer range how the kings of blindfold chess played.

Paul Morphy

Paul Charles Morphy was born in New Orleans June 22, 1837 and died in the same city July 10, 1884. His chess talent was evident when he was a child, but he was sixteen years old before he came to realize his great ability at blindfold play. His first such game appears to have resulted in an easy victory over one of his schoolmasters, the Jesuit Father Bordequin. Morphy's blindfold play displays the same understanding of open positions which enabled him to become the greatest player of his time.

Morphy never played more than 8 games at a time, with his most impressive exhibitions taking place while he was in England. The following game, generally considered one of his best, was played in Birmingham, England with seven others on August 27, 1858.

BISHOP'S OPENING

White	*Black*
Morphy	Freeman
1. **P–K4**	**P–K4**
2. **B–B4**	**B–B4**
3. **P–QKt4**	**B–Kt3**
4. **Kt–KB3**	**P–Q3**
5. **P–Q4**	

5 P–B3, followed by 6 P–Q3, is sounder. As played, Morphy's KP becomes a target–but observe how he opens up the game!

5.	**PXP**
6. **KtXP**	**Kt–KB3**
7. **Kt–QB3**	**O–O**
8. **O–O**	

Steinitz, who was enchanted by the beauty of this game, felt that 8 P–B3 would have solidified Morphy's position.

8.	**KtXP!**
9. **KtXKt**	**P–Q4**
10. **B–KKt5**	**Q–K1?**

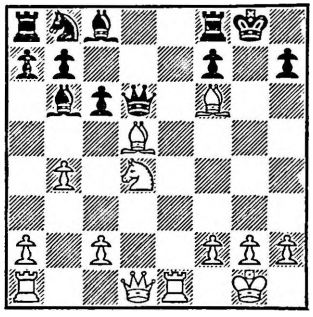
Either Q–Q2 or P–KB3 would have been superior. Morphy now explodes the position in a few moves.

11.	BXP	P–QB3
12.	R–K1!	Q–Q2

Now the position is ripe for the sort of sacrifice which made the name of Paul Morphy a terror to his opponents!

13.	Kt–B6ch!	PXKt
14.	BXP(KB6)	Q–Q3

Upon 14....QXB, 15 R–K5 would win for White. And, if 14....PXB; 15 R–K5! (threatening mate on KKt5), P–KR3; 16 ....R–Kt5ch!, PXR; 17 Q–R5 and mate next move.



15. **Kt–K6!!**

A great deal has been written about this move. Steinitz called it "the initiation of a finely conceived problem, beautiful and accurate in many variations, but defective in one main line of play" (see move 16). White's immediate threat is Q–Kt4 mate. If, to stop this, Black plays 15 ....PXKt, White will win with 16 Q–Kt4ch, K–B2; 17 Q–Kt7ch, K–K1; 18 BXKP, BXPch (if BXB; 19 QR–Q1); 19 KXB, Q–Q5ch; 20 K–Kt3, QXB; 21 B–Kt4 dis ch, K–Q1; 22 QR–Q1ch, B–Q2; 23 RXBch, K–B1; 24 RXP dis ch, Kt–Q2; 25 QXKt mate.

Steinitz claimed that White would have had a forced win by playing B–K6 in the diagramed position. Thus, 15 B–K6, PXB; 16 Q–Kt4ch, K–B2; 17 Q–Kt7ch, K–K1; 18 KtXKP, with variations similar to those above. And, in this line, White would answer 15 ....BXB by 16 R–K5, while 15....Q–B5 would be answered by 16 B–K5. To continue with the game:

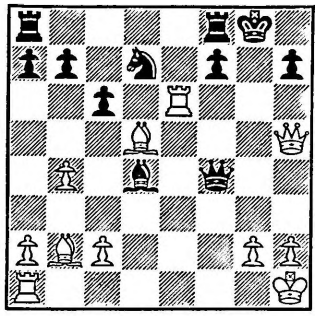
15.		BXKt
16.	Q–R5	BXPch?

Black should have played 16 ....Q–B5, and, if 17 RXB, Kt–Q2, against which White would have no satisfactory continuation. For example, 18 B–Kt2, PXB; 19 R–R6, KR–K1! Other replies to 16....Q–B5 are equally unavailing.

17.	K–R1	Q–B5
18.	RXB	Kt–Q2
19.	B–Kt2	B–Q5?

White's threat was R–Kt6ch, but Black could have captured the Rook instead of playing B–Q5. For example, 19....PXR; 20 BXPch, R–B2; 21 R–KB1, R–K1; 22 QXRch, QXQ; 23 BXQch,

KXB; 24 RXBch, K–Kt3; with a draw as the probable result.



20.	P–Kt3	Kt–B3
21.	PXQ	KtXQ
22.	BXB	KtXP

If 22 . . . . PXR; White wins by 23 BXPch, R–B2; 24 R–Kt1ch, K–B1; 25 B–B5ch, K–K1; 26 R–Kt8ch. Now Morphy demonstrates just how exactly he understands the position:

23.	R–Kt1ch	Kt–Kt3
24.	QRXKtch	RPXR
25.	RXPch	K–R2
26.	R–Kt7ch	K–R3
27.	B–K4	P–KB4!
28.	B–Q3	P–Kt3
29.	R–Kt3	R–B2
30.	B–K5	R–K1
31.	B–B4ch	K–R2
32.	R–Kt5	R–K8ch
33.	K–Kt2	R–KKt2
34.	BXPch	K–R1
35.	P–KR4	RXRch
36.	BXR	R–K1
37.	K–B3	Resigns

Labourdonnais and McDonnell

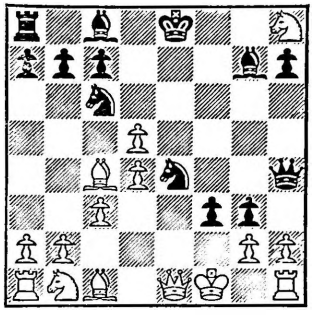
All the world—at least all the world we care about at the moment, the chess world—has heard of the classic chess encounters of Labourdonnais and McDonnell. Their battle has been sung in French by Mery, in English by D'Arblay. Both of these players were short-lived: Louis Charles de Labourdonnais was born in Paris in 1795 and died in London in 1840, while Alexander McDonnell was born in Belfast, Ireland, in 1798 and died at the early age of 37.

The games between these two giants are easily available; every chess player should be familiar with them. There have been few masters whose games are more instructive or enjoyable. This is especially true of their blindfold games, for both were exceptionally good at this form. Let us look at a few samples of their ability.

PARIS, 1836

SALVIO GAMBIT

White	*Black*
Joury	Labourdonnais (*Sans Voir*)
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. P–KB4	PXP
3. Kt–KB3	P–KKt4
4. B–B4	P–Kt5
5. Kt–K5	Q–R5ch
6. K–B1	P–B6
7. KtXP(B7)	Kt–QB3
8. P–Q4	B–Kt2
9. P–B3	Kt–B3
10. KtXR	P–Q4
11. PXP	Kt–K5
12. Q–K1	P–Kt6!



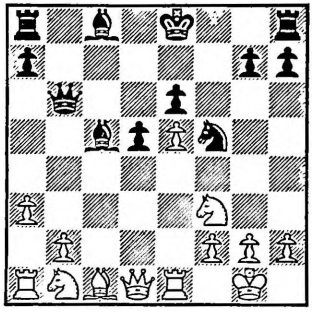
13. B–Q3	PXPch
14. KXP	B–R6ch
15. K–Kt1	KtXQP!!
16. QXKtch	QXQ
17. BXQ	Kt–K7 mate

LONDON, 1829

White	*Black*
J. Worell	McDonnell

(McDonnell gives the KBP and two moves to his opponent.)

1. P–K4	
2. Kt–KB3	P–K3
3. P–Q4	P–Q4
4. P–K5	P–QB4
5. B–Kt5ch	Kt–B3
6. BXKtch	PXB
7. P–B3	Q–Kt3
8. O–O	B–R3
9. R–K1	PXP
10. PXP	Kt–K2
11. Kt–Kt5	B–B1
12. P–QR3	Kt–B4
13. Kt–KB3	P–B4
14. PXP	BXP



15. P–QKt4?	BXPch
16. K–R1	BXR
17. QXB	O–O
18. P–QR4	R–Kt1
19. P–Kt5	P–QR3
20. Kt–B3	PXP
21. KtXKtP	B–Q2
22. B–R3	KR–B1
23. Kt–Q6	KtXKt
24. BXKt	R–R1
25. P–R5	Q–Kt7
26. R–Kt1	Q–B6
27. Q–KB1	P–KR3
28. Kt–R4	Q–B5
29. Kt–Kt6	QXQch
30. RXQ	B–Kt4
31. R–QKt1	K–R2
32. Kt–K7	R–B6

33.	P–R3	B–Q6
34.	R–Kt6	RXP
35.	B–Kt4	R–R8ch
36.	K–R2	R–B7
37.	RXP	B–K5
38.	R–Q6	RXP mate

The gods undoubtedly smile ironically over the final resting place of McDonnell and Labourdonnais: the battles over, they sleep in peace together in London's Kensal Green cemetery.

Joseph Henry Blackburne

Blackburne, the grand old man of British chess who was jokingly referred to as "The Black Death," was an outstanding blindfold player. His life was long, and his chess career extended over more than sixty years. Born in Manchester on December 10, 1842, Blackburne died in London September 1, 1924. The following game shows the young Blackburne at his best; it is one of ten played simultaneously at the City of London Chess Club in 1871. Lively and interesting, it demonstrates beyond any doubt the combinative ability of the pride of British chess.

SCOTCH GAMBIT

White	*Black*
Blackburne	Dr. Ballard
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. P–Q4	PXP
4. B–QB4	B–B4
5. Kt–Kt5	

Blackburne attempts an all-out attack which, though premature, serves to frighten Black. 5 P–B3 was best.

5.		Kt–R3
6.	Q–R5	

White continues the attack. 6 KtXKBP was inferior, because of 6 . . . . KtXKt; 7 BXKtch, KXB; 8 Q–R5ch, P–Kt3; 9 QXB, R–K1 with the better position for Black.

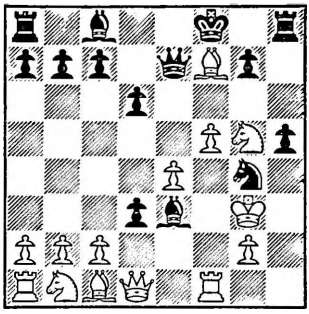
6.		Q–K2
7.	O–O	Kt–K4

Better would have been 7 . . . . P–Q3, which would release the QB, threatening moves like B–KKt5, followed by O–O–O.

8.	B–Kt3	P–Q3
9.	P–KR3	Kt–Kt1
10.	P–KB4	P–Q6ch?
11.	K–R2	Kt–KB3
12.	Q–Q1	QKt–Kt5ch

Black attempts an enterprising counterattack which puts life into the position, but not enough for Black!

13.	PXKt	KtXPch
14.	K–Kt3	P–KR4!
15.	P–B5	B–K6
16.	BXPch	K–B1



Black receives a surprise package now!

17.	QXKt!!	PXQ
18.	BXB	Q–K4ch
19.	B–B4	QXKtP
20.	Kt–Q2	PXP
21.	Kt–B4	

The game was adjourned in this position. Blackburne, in an exhaustive analysis of the game after he had completed it, claimed that White must now win in every variation. Let's observe the method developed by Blackburne after the intermission:

21.		Q–B6ch
22.	Kt–K3	B–Q2
23.	KXP	B–R5
24.	Kt–Q5	Q–Q6
25.	B–Kt6	

Threatening mate in two by Kt–K6ch and Kt–K7 mate! That's all!

25.		R–R3
26.	Kt–K6ch	K–Kt1
27.	Kt–K7ch	K–R1
28.	R–R1!	Q–Q8ch
29.	QRXQ	PXR(Q)ch
30.	RXQ	BXRch
31.	K–Kt3	R–R8
32.	B–Q2	

Threatening B–B3. 32 Kt–Kt5 would have won the exchange, but the move chosen by Blackburne is more decisive.

32.		B–R4
33.	B–B3	R–KKt1
34.	P–B6	BXB
35.	KtXBch	K–R2
36.	P–B7, and White wins.	

"Many competent judges hold this to be the finest game I ever played blindfold," Blackburne observes. Lesser mortals would have been proud to play such a game with full sight of the chessboard and men!

Johannes Herman Zuckertort

Zuckertort was a man of many accomplishments, which accounts, perhaps, for his unbounded egotism. Doctor of Letters, author, editor, and chess master, he was also a keen blindfold player. Born in Lublin, Poland on August 7, 1842, he died in

London July 20, 1888. This game was played in a blindfold exhibition at London in 1880.

VIENNA OPENING

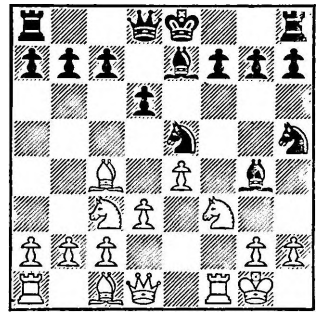
White	*Black*
Zuckertort	Amateur
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
3. P–KB4	P–Q3

Today we know that 3.... P–Q4 gives Black a good game.

4. Kt–B3	Kt–B3
5. B–B4	B–Kt5
6. O–O	B–K2
7. P–Q3	Kt–KR4

7.... Kt–Q5 is better.

8. PXP	KtXP



White now runs true to form.

9. KtXKt!	BXQ
10. BXPch	K–B1
11. BXKt dis ch	B–B3
12. RXBch!	PXR
13. B–R6ch	K–K2
14. Kt–Q5ch	K–K3
15. B–B7ch	KXKt

16. P–QB3, and Black cannot avoid mate in one move by B–B4.

Harry Nelson Pillsbury

Harry Nelson Pillsbury was born in Somerville, Massachusetts, on December 5, 1872, and died at Frankford, Pennsylvania, on June 7, 1906. The champion of the United States performed marvels in blindfold chess. Most remarkable of all was his play at Hanover in 1902. His 21 opponents were probably the strongest aggregation ever faced by a blindfold master. Eighteen came from the Haupt Tourney then taking place; the other three were the top players in a secondary event. Against these powerful amateurs Pillsbury gained the amazing score of 3 wins, 11 draws and 7 losses. The following game from the Hanover exhibition was played on January 27, 1902.

MAX LANGE

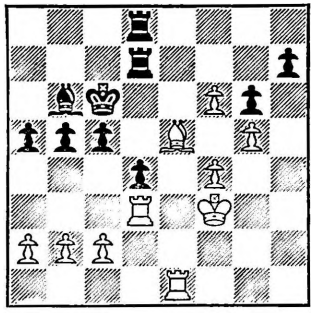
White	*Black*
Pillsbury	J. Moller
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. P–Q4	PXP
4. B–B4	Kt–B3
5. O–O	B–B4
6. P–K5	P–Q4
7. PXKt	PXB
8. R–K1ch	B–K3
9. Kt–Kt5	P–KKt3

I prefer 9 . . . . Q–Q4.

10.	Q–Kt4	Q–Q4

But here O–O is definitely the correct move.

11.	B–B4	K–Q2
12.	KtXB	PXKt
13.	Kt–Q2	Q–B4
14.	QXQ	KPXQ
15.	KtXP	KR–K1
16.	K–B1	P–QKt4
17.	Kt–K5ch	KtXKt
18.	BXKt	K–B3
19.	QR–Q1	QR–Q1
20.	P–KB4	R–Q2
21.	R–Q3	KR–Q1
22.	P–KR3	P–QR4
23.	K–B2	B–Kt3
24.	K–B3	K–Kt2
25.	P–KKt4	PXPch
26.	PXP	P–B4
27.	P–Kt5	K–B3



28.	P–B5!	

In the complications which follow this move, Pillsbury's play is noteworthy.

28.		R–K1
29.	K–B4	B–B2
30.	R(3)–Q1	R–Q4
31.	BXB	RXPch
32.	K–Kt4	RXR
33.	RXR	KXB
34.	R–K7ch	K–Q3
35.	RXP	P–B5
36.	R–R3	K–K4
37.	R–KB3	K–K5
38.	RXR	PXRch
39.	K–Kt3	Resigns

White will Queen the KBP, and Black's counter by P–Q6 fails because of 39 . . . . P–Q6; 40 PXPch, PXP; 41 K–B2!

Richard Reti

An outstanding blindfold player and one of the greatest chess teachers of all time was Richard Reti, a Czech who gave many blindfold exhibitions all over the world. He was born at Pezinok May 28, 1889, and died in Prague on June 6, 1929.

Reti made his blindfold record in São Paulo, Brazil, on February 7, 1925. His 10-hour exhibition resulted in 21 wins, 6 draws, and 2 losses. On his return from Brazil, Reti was astonished to learn in Spain that Juncosa had played 32 blindfold games simultaneously in Zaragoza. Flabbergasted, Reti rushed to the Spanish city to verify the report that Juncosa had not only succeeded in this feat, but had scored 29 wins, and 1 draw against 2 losses! Personal investigation revealed that 29 of the invited players had failed to appear and been defaulted; only the draw and the losses were the result of actual play. The feat would therefore seem to have been rather quixotic, with the substitution of chessboards for windmills, for no world record can be achieved in this way!

Here is a game which illustrates Reti's skill, one of 24 played by him in an exhibition on August 6, 1919, at Haarlem. Against a picked group of Dutch experts, his score was 16½-7½ after only 7½ hours of play!

FRENCH DEFENSE

	White	*Black*
	Reti	Kortmann
1.	**P–K4**	**P–K3**
2.	**P–Q4**	**P–Q4**
3.	**Kt–QB3**	**P–KKt3?**
4.	**Kt–B3**	**B–Kt2**
5.	**B–KKt5!**	**Kt–K2**
6.	**P–K5**	**P–QB3?**

Black has committed two grievous opening errors and, as a result, has a completely blocked position.

7.	**Q–Q2**	**Kt–Q2**
8.	**P–KR4!**	**Kt–Kt3**
9.	**B–Q3**	**B–Q2**
10.	**B–R6**	

White begins his attack by depriving the K side of the support of the B. 10 . . . . O–O now would result in 11 P–R5!

10.		**BXB**
11.	**QXB**	**Kt–B4**
12.	**BXKt**	**KPXB**
13.	**Q–Kt7**	**R–KB1**

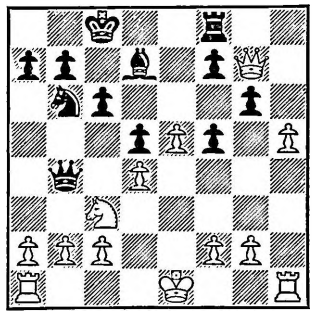
Now White can at least win the exchange by Kt–Kt5 and KtXRP.

14.	**Kt–KKt5**	**Q–K2**

If 14 . . . . K–K2; 15 KtXRP, R–KKt1; 16 Q–B6ch, K–K1; 17 Q–Q6 wins because of the threat of Kt–B6ch.

15.	**KtXRP**	**O–O–O**
16.	**KtXR**	**RXKt**
17.	**P–R5!**	**Q–Kt5**

How is White to meet the threat of QXKtP?



18. PXP!

Quite correctly, White opens new lines on the K side. Black's threat on the Q side is meaningless so long as the White Q attacks the R at KB1.

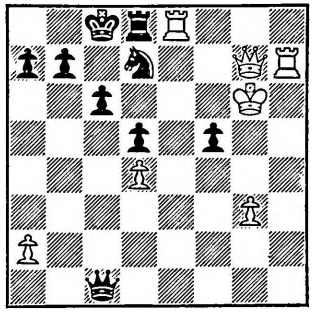
18.		PXP
19.	R–R7!	R–Q1
20.	P–K6!!	

Reti sees every possibility in the position, and forces the attack home. If 20 .... BXP now, then 21 Q–B7 mate.

20.		QXKtP
21.	PXBch	KtXP
22.	R–QKt1	QXKtch
23.	K–B1	QXBP
24.	R–K1	Q–Q6ch
25.	K–Kt1	Q–Q7
26.	R–K8!	

Now White threatens mate in two beginning with QXKtch! Black's last hope is to manage a perpetual check, and Reti's method of avoiding this lends special interest to the game.

26.		Q–B8ch
27.	K–R2	Q–B5ch
28.	P–Kt3!	QXBPch
29.	K–R3	Q–B8ch
30.	K–R4	Q–R8ch
31.	K–Kt5	Q–B8ch
32.	KXP!	Resigns



Gyula Breyer

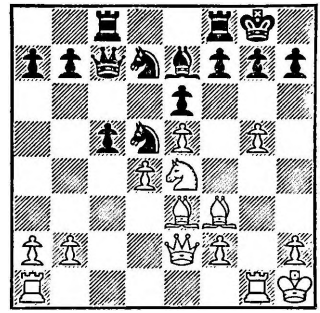
Breyer, one of the most original masters of all time, was born in Hungary in 1894 and died November 11, 1922, in Pressburg, Czechoslovakia. At Kassa, Hungary, in January, 1921, he played 25 blindfold games simultaneously, winning 15, drawing 7 and losing 3. This world record was universally considered as but a forecast of even greater chess achievements to come, but the

early death of this genius at the age of twenty-eight robbed the chess world of one of its finest stars.

The following game is one of 12 played at a simultaneous blindfold exhibition at Kaschau on January 7, 1917. Notice how coolly Breyer prepares his attack, and how methodically he executes it.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

White	*Black*
Breyer	Dr. Franz Kászonyi
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. P–QB4	Kt–KB3
3. PXP	KtXP
4. P–K4	Kt–Kt3
5. Kt–KB3	B–Kt5
6. B–K2	P–K3
7. Kt–B3	B–K2
8. O–O	O–O
9. B–K3	BXKt
10. BXB	Kt–B5
11. P–K5	P–QB3
12. Q–K2	Kt–Kt3
13. Kt–K4	QKt–Q2
14. P–KKt4	P–QB4
15. K–R1	R–B1
16. R–KKt1	Q–B2
17. P–Kt5	Kt–Q4



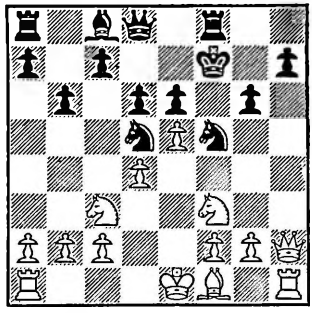
18.	Kt–B6ch!	PXKt
19.	PXPch	K–R1
20.	BXKt	BXP
21.	B–K4	BXP
22.	Q–R5	P–B4
23.	PXB	PXB
24.	B–R6	R–KKt1
25.	Q–B7	QXP
26.	QXKt	RXRch
27.	RXR	R–KKt1
28.	RXRch	KXR
29.	Q–K8 mate	

Alexander Alekhine

The late world champion was undoubtedly the greatest blindfold player of all time. In 1925 at Paris, he played 28 games, of which he won 22, drew 3, and lost 3. Here is a game from that exhibition, in which Black tries to puzzle the blindfold player by an extremely irregular opening. Result: the Black King becomes a wandering monarch in search of a realm!

IRREGULAR DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Alekhine	Cercle de Montmarte
1. P–K4	P–K3
2. P–Q4	P–Q3
3. Kt–KB3	P–KKt3
4. Kt–B3	Kt–K2
5. B–K3	Kt–Q2
6. Q–Q2	B–Kt2
7. B–KR6	O–O
8. P–KR4	P–Kt3
9. P–R5	Kt–KB3
10. PXP	BPXP
11. BXB	KXB
12. Q–R6ch	K–B2
13. P–K5	Kt–B4
14. Q–R2	Kt–Q4



15.	QXPch	K–K1
16.	QXKtPch	K–Q2
17.	R–R7ch	Kt(Q4)–K2
18.	P–Q5	KPXP
19.	KtXP	K–B3
20.	KtXKtch	KtXKt
21.	Q–Kt5	R–K1
22.	O–O–O	K–Kt2
23.	PXP	PXP
24.	R–K1	Resigns

Enter Myself:

I was born in Antwerp, Belgium, September 17, 1903. Let me quote from Brian Harley in *Chess and Its Stars.*

"A few months after Alekhine's display in Paris, a new blindfold expert came into the limelight. George Koltanowski of Belgium conducted the very exceptional number of 20 games at Namur. It is curious that this young man plays his simultaneous blindfold games in much the same clear-cut style as he plays his individual match games. I have heard it said, and not altogether in jest, that one would stand as good a chance against Koltanowski with his eyes on the pieces as against Koltanowski *sans voir.*"

It was on May 10, 1931, that I superseded Alekhine as blindfold champion, and Reti as well. Alekhine's score had been 23½ out of 28; Reti's, less than that out of 29. I scored 25 out of 30, with 10 games drawn and none lost. The exhibition, which took 10½ hours, was against a group of players drawn from the chess clubs of Antwerp.

It may be of interest to describe the mechanics of playing a large number of blindfold games. At this exhibition, I divided my opponents into five equal groups. In the first and third groups I opened with P–K4 in five games, and P–KB4 in the sixth. In the second and fourth groups it was P–K4 in four games, P–Q4 in the fifth and P–KB4 in the sixth. All of the games in the fifth group were opened in an irregular manner. Here is one of the most eventful games (Board No. 1):

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Trachtenberg
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–B3
5. P–Q4	PXP
6. P–K5	P–Q4
7. PXKt	PXB
8. R–K1ch	B–K3
9. Kt–Kt5	Q–Q4
10. Kt–QB3	Q–B4
11. QKt–K4	B–KB1

Few openings have been so extensively analyzed as this one. The critics are now divided between this move of Rubinstein and the more solid O–O–O.

12. KtXBP!	KXKt
13. Kt–Kt5ch	K–K1?

Weak. Either K–Kt1 or K–Kt3 would be preferable.

14. KtXB	K–B2

If 14....K–Q2; 15 KtXQP. So, Black makes the sad journey to Kt3 in any event—and with fatal loss of time.

15. Kt–Kt5ch	K–Kt3
16. P–B7	B–K2
17. R–K6ch	B–B3
18. P–KKt4	Q–Q4
19. P–KB4	Kt–K2

Played to prevent 20 P–B5ch.

20. P–KR4	Resigns

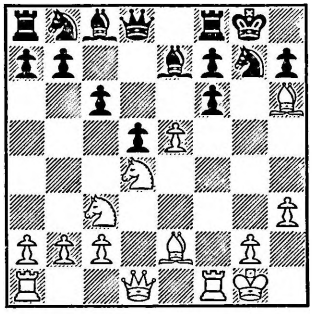
A simple winning procedure, after Black's forced 20....P–KR4, is 21 P–B5ch, KtXP; 22 PXKtch, QXBP; 23 Q–K2. With a piece for two Pawns, White's win would then be a simple affair. And here is another game from the championship exhibition (Board No. 14):

PHILIDOR DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Captain La Force
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	P–Q3
3. P–Q4	PXP
4. KtXP	Kt–KB3
5. Kt–QB3	B–K2
6. B–K2	O–O
7. O–O	P–B3
8. P–KR3	B–K3
9. P–B4	P–Q4?

A poor move which invites the advance of the White Pawns.

10.	P–K5	Kt–K1
11.	P–B5	B–B1
12.	P–B6!	PXP
13.	B–R6	Kt–Kt2



14. B–Q3

White now institutes an attack which, while in all probability unsound, has the virtue of taking good advantage of Black's undeveloped position. Black—good fellow!—obliges by leaping at the possibility of winning a piece.

14.	....	B–QB4
15.	BXKt	BXKtch
16.	K–R1	KXB
17.	Q–R5	P–KB4
18.	RXP!	BXR
19.	QXB	Q–R5

To prevent the threatened mate at White's KR7. However, Black would have been happier after 19 .... R–R1. White's next move threatens to cut off the Black Queen's defense of the RP by planting a Kt on KR5.

20.	Kt–K2	B–K6
21.	R–KB1	Kt–R3
22.	R–B3	B–Kt4
23.	R–Kt3	P–B3

Of course, 23 .... P–KR3 would have permitted Q–R7 mate!

24.	PXPch	RXP
25.	RXBch	Resigns

After 25 .... K–B2, follows 26 Q–Q7ch, K–B1; 27 Q–Kt7ch, etc.

Alekhine Again!

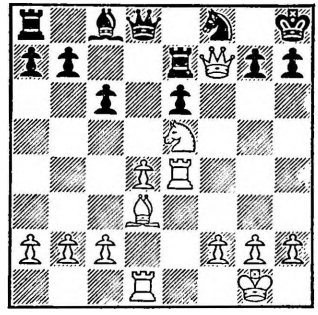
Dr. Alexander Alekhine was born in Moscow in 1892 and died in exile near Lisbon in 1946. His chess career is a veritable modern Midas legend, since this king of the chessboard turned each of his games into an endless source of pleasure and instruction for all time. Each move made by Alekhine at his best is a touch of genius, and it is hardly strange that this mastery should have been especially evident in his blindfold play.

On July 16, 1933, at the Century of Progress Exhibition in Chicago, Dr. Alekhine set up a new world blindfold record by playing 32 games at once in 12½ hours of actual play. He won

19, drew 9, and lost 4. In the following game from this exhibition, note how Alekhine again demonstrates that the road from superior development to quick victory is a short one.

CENTER COUNTER GAMBIT

White	*Black*
Alekhine	Kohler
1. P–K4	P–Q4
2. PXP	QXP
3. Kt–QB3	Q–QR4
4. Kt–B3	P–K3
5. P–Q4	P–QB3
6. B–Q3	Kt–B3
7. O–O	B–K2
8. B–KKt5	O–O
9. Kt–K5	QKt–Q2
10. R–K1	R–K1
11. Q–B3	Kt–B1
12. Kt–K4	Q–Q1
13. QR–Q1	KtXKt
14. QXPch	K–R1
15. BXB	RXB
16. RXKt!!	Resigns



If 16....RXQ; 17 KtXRch, followed by KtXQ, wins the Black Rook. Should Black refrain from capturing the Queen, 17 R–R4 will win quickly.

After Alekhine

The battle for the world's blindfold title never ends. Soon it was my turn to reappear in the magic circle. On September 20, 1937, I played 34 games blindfold in 13½ hours in Edinburgh, Scotland, winning 24, drawing 10 and losing—none! Details of this exhibition will be found in a later chapter.

In the latter part of 1943, sensational news came from Rosario, Argentina; a United Press story told of the new world record made by Mendel Najdorf of Poland. It was said that he had played 40 games. So far no game, or other positive verification, of this marvelous exhibition has come to light. Most blindfold masters of the past generation have contended that 40 games would be about the limit any chess master could ever hope to achieve. More recent news from Latin America indicated that Najdorf had surpassed his previously reported feat by successfully conducting 45 simultaneous blindfold games. If it can be

shown that the conditions of play were bona fide, and if these performances by Najdorf are ever recognized as official, then we are at the height of human possibility in the blindfold field.

The case against blindfold chess, with all its fascination for both the master and his victims, lies in Morphy's criticism: "It proves nothing." The great "solid" masters—Steinitz, Lasker and Capablanca—all avoided the exhaustive mental labor entailed in blindfold play. Perhaps they were correct in preserving their powers for match-games and ordinary simultaneous performances, but, as Brian Harley so aptly put it, "Solidity is not the only thing in chess."

CHAPTER TWO

Early Blindfold Days

YES, THIS IS AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY, THE STORY OF ONE MAN'S CHESS career and its special development over the years. Thinking back, it seems that the most important events are those connected with this career. The first of these, of course, is that of September 17, 1903; on that date I was born, in Antwerp, Belgium.

It was not until I was six years old that what was later to be a remarkable memory first evidenced itself. There was at that time a chocolate bar, very popular among the children, which contained a series of picture post cards. There were a hundred in the series, and I had soon eaten enough chocolate to have collected all of them. Each one showed some scene of life in a foreign land, or a map of the country, as well as a representative postage stamp and a costume typical of its inhabitants. The cards were numbered, and my family were pleased to discover that I had memorized the entire series in all of its details. It was the first occasion on which I became aware of my photographic memory—once seen or heard, always remembered without any special effort. This ability was most marked when dealing with subjects which I liked, such as geography or mathematics, and later, languages and chess.

In 1914, the Germans marched into Belgium. When they were on the point of reaching Antwerp, my father, who until then had convinced himself that he would not leave his house, was caught up by the popular hysteria and decided to move his family to Holland. I'll never forget that march! We walked from six in the evening until six in the morning, part of one of those mass movements of population which have become so terribly familiar in more recent times. We had been among the last to flee, and, having left most of our worldly goods behind us, it is

hardly surprising that we had also neglected to take any food. Yes, we did eat something—raw carrots stolen from the fields through which we hurried. Chess players like to imagine that there is no panic comparable to that felt when a comfortable position collapses under a sudden attack. This chess player has known several panics more acute and infinitely more terrible, and this, the first of my many migrations, will never be dulled by time.

The Dutch have always treated refugees well, but after two days, my father decided to move on to England. We left for London on an overloaded steamer. A few days after our arrival I got a large splinter in my right leg. Things were still too hectic to bother anyone about such a petty matter, so I pulled out the sliver of wood, washed the cut as best an eleven-year-old could, and continued playing in the open air. Next day I was feverish, and a doctor was called. After a hasty examination, his diagnosis was Spanish flu, the fashion of the day. Treatment consisted, in part, of my being locked in a room, alone. After all, others must be protected from the contagion.

Two days later my right foot and leg were completely swollen. I was rushed to a hospital where the doctors in charge found that I had a serious case of blood poisoning affecting both legs. There was little that they could do. Perhaps I could be saved by amputating both legs? No, that would not help either, for the poison was in my veins and would soon work its way to my heart. An Indian surgeon resident in London then came forward with a suggestion. He would attempt a new treatment if my father would assume all responsibility. There was nothing else to do, so my father signed the necessary papers. That night Operation No. 1 was performed, and next morning they told me that I had screamed the roof off all night.

I was in bed for two years, had fourteen operations and emerged alive and kicking. Yes, kicking, for I still had two good legs!

You may wonder about the connection between my blindfold chess career and this tale of a child's near-fatal illness. But consider that I was forced to spend two years in bed, most of it in solitude, and you will understand that here was an opportunity

to develop any one of a number of special interests. My special interest became the development of my memory. True, I regretfully admit that I cannot remember the name of the good doctor who saved me, but I did pass away the days and weeks in memorizing anything I read or saw, and in adding little bits of fantasy to them. It was a special kind of daydreaming which I feel was the invaluable preparation for my later ability to play a large number of blindfold games at once. It is probably good that I had not yet learned how to play chess when I was in the hospital, for I not only might have become a boy world's champion but would surely have landed in a mental hospital! No, one hospital was enough.

My father taught me how to play chess in 1919. I took to the game like a baby takes to candy. All of my brothers played chess, and we played a series of family tournaments which I won regularly. We had returned to Antwerp by then, and I soon began the hunt for stronger opposition. This I found at the local chess club, "Le Cercle des Echecs d'Anvers." There was a group of youngsters like myself who joined the club at about the same time. What a crew we were! Sapira, Dunkelblum, Censer, Perlmutter, Izzy Schernetzky and others joined me in playing, eating, drinking, and sleeping chess.

There was a group of eight or ten young players at the club every evening, and many were the early morning hours when we were literally kicked out of the restaurant in which the club was located. No master game was safe in our hands, although we revered all of them. Anything and everything about the game or its players was hungrily devoured by that roving pack of Antwerp chess-wolves.

We soon heard of the exploits of a Serbian student at the University of Ghent, Branco Tchabritch, who was able to play two blindfold games simultaneously. Two of us were designated to defend the honor of the Antwerp club, and S. Berenblum and I were off to Ghent. I went in a very cynical mood, for we had spent an entire evening discussing the possibility of such a feat and had come to the conclusion that there had to be a catch in it somewhere. I was going to find out just how it was done.

The Serbian sat in the far corner of the playing room with his

back to the two boards. A teller made his moves for him and told him our moves in turn. I was thunderstruck: no one ever came near him, he used no mirrors, and his eyes were set in the normal position! After three hours of play, he had drawn both games. Here is the game I played on March 13, 1921, a game with more significance than merit, for it was this game which started me on the road to Utopia with my eyes closed.

VIENNA OPENING

White	*Black*
M. B. Tchabritch	Koltanowski
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–QB3	B–B4
3. Kt–B3	P–Q3
4. P–Q4	PXP
5. KtXP	Kt–QB3
6. KtXKt	PXKt
7. B–QB4	Kt–B3
8. O–O	B–K3
9. B–Kt3	O–O
10. B–Kt5	BXB
11. RPXB	P–KR3
12. B–K3	BXB
13. PXB	Kt–Q2
14. R–B3	Kt–K4
15. R–Kt3	Q–R5
16. Q–K2	P–KB4
17. PXP	RXP
18. R–R4	Q–K2
19. P–KR3	R–Kt4
20. RXR	QXR
21. Kt–K4	Q–Kt3
22. Kt–B2	Q–KB3
23. Kt–Kt4	KtXKt
24. QXKt	QXP
25. Q–K6ch	K–R1
26. R–QB4	P–B4
27. Q–K7	Q–R8ch
28. K–R2	Q–R4
29. R–KB4	Q–QB6
30. P–K4	QXBP
31. R–B8ch	RXR
32. QXRch	K–R2
33. Q–B5ch	Drawn

Tchabritch's system, as he explained it to me after our game, was very simple. He told me that the all-important idea was to know the board thoroughly, and that he had a chessboard drawn on the ceiling above his bed. Thus, he would study the board each morning upon awakening. (No, my family refused to allow me to decorate my ceiling! But more of that later.)

On my return to those Antwerp chess innocents I found a willing audience for what, with each telling, grew in fantasy to be the most wondrous tale of all time. Tchabritch was the greatest of chess masters; his blindfold play so wonderful that only one who had seen it could appreciate its beauty. Then and there, blindfold play became the sole thought of a score of crazy youngsters, with one George Koltanowski the craziest of the lot!

We played blindfold chess wherever we were—dancing, hiking, on buses and trains; wherever two of us happened to be, we would begin a blindfold game. All over Antwerp people shook their heads at this babbling crew.

The vision of the exhibition at Ghent remained with me. On April 13, 1921, I attempted my first simultaneous blindfold exhibition. With my father acting as teller, and with my brothers Jack and Harry as opponents, we started at 8 P.M. and finished two hours later for my first perfect blindfold score. Unfortunately, the session took place at home, and the boys at the club refused to believe me when I rushed down to tell them about it. In no time at all, I found that I had accepted their challenge to play three games blindfold at the club the following week.

What a week that was! For days before the event I ate little and worried much. To this day I remember that nerve-racking, sleepless night before the exhibition. Could I really do it? Well, I certainly found out. There they were, my best friends all around me, everyone exuding so obvious an aura of disbelief that I was more nervous than I ever have been at any chess event since. Chess players tell me that they can often tell how bad their game really is by how much their collars wilt. Mine practically melted!

Sapira, Dunkelblum and Autfenne were my opponents. I started well and after an hour's play had the boys feeling very uncomfortable. Alas, my triumph was short-lived. I soon lost track of Board 1. Instead of relaxing and thinking back over the moves I had made, I became desperate. So, just any old move. Impossible? Then make another move quickly. One blunder, another blunder, and soon I was mated on all three boards. Then and there I swore off blindfold chess. Never again would I suffer like that!

I was finished, but my friends were not. Bless them for it, they pulled my leg for months and, as boys do, arranged one situation after another in which I was made the butt of some elaborate joke. Self-defense forced me back to blindfold chess. I started to play single blindfold games again, until I was able to announce that I would be willing to play six of my cohorts blindfold at the club. This they had to see! They did. The method I had quietly

but surely developed worked, and after three hours of play I had won all six games. Now I had the wolves eating out of my hands!

A year later I was playing 16 games blindfold, which represented a new Belgian record. In 1924, while in the Belgian Army, I played 20 at Namur, a sort of pay-off for having nothing to do but peel potatoes for two hours a day.

Here is a game played in an eight-game blindfold exhibition at Antwerp in 1923.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE

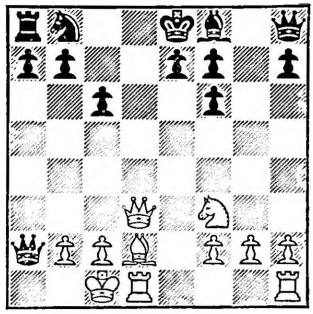
White	*Black*
Koltanowski	A. Dunkelblum
1. P–K4	P–QB3
2. P–Q4	P–Q4
3. Kt–QB3	PXP
4. KtXP	B–B4
5. B–Q3	

A little sacrifice which nets White a big advantage in development. Black bites.

5.		QXP
6.	Kt–KB3	Q–Q1
7.	Q–K2	Kt–KB3
8.	KtXKtch	KtPXKt
9.	BXB	Q–R4ch

Black regains his piece, and then bites at another Pawn.

10.	B–Q2	QXB
11.	O–O–O	Q–K3
12.	Q–Q3	QXRP?



Black tosses away his life preserver and plunges into the sea. He should have played 12.... Kt–Q2, but like so many of my opponents in blindfold exhibitions, he prefers to try for an easy win—only to find out that the blindfold player "sees" more than one would think!

13. Q–Q8ch!

The finish is identical to that in a famous game between Reti and Tartakower which arose out of a French Defense.

13.		KXQ
14.	B–R5 dbl ch	K–B1 (or K–K1)
15.	R–Q8 mate	

Two Masters vs. The Rest

A blindfold exhibition against first-class opposition is one of the world's most difficult mental activities. The blindfold player finds it necessary to conduct a number of games in which he can be successful only by understanding the workings of the minds of his opponents. Imagine how much more difficult it would be if you not only had to do this, but also had to fathom the plans of the world's strongest player, who is playing on your side. More than 600 people turned out to watch the blindfold tandem exhibition staged by the *Sports Revue* at Antwerp in 1934, in which Dr. Alekhine and I, playing the White pieces on six boards, made alternate moves to complete our task in five hours. What a session! The *American Chess Bulletin* of March, 1934, wrote:

"In short, it consisted of a tandem, blindfold-simultaneous performance against consulting teams undertaken by Dr. Alexander Alekhine and George Koltanowski, Belgian champion, conceded to be the two finest exponents of the art of playing *sans voir* living today. They were opposed by 24 players grouped in consultation at six boards of four players each. The result was that the masters won three of the games, drew two and lost but one.

"The twenty-four players, all of first-class strength, were considered an exceptionally strong lot. As the tandem players were not permitted to consult with each other, the result achieved by them must be regarded as very fine. When the task was finished, Koltanowski, who held the record for blindfold play until Alekhine set up new figures at Chicago last summer, declared that he felt far more tired than after finishing 30 simultaneous games played blindfold in the ordinary manner. Dr. Alekhine, evidently impressed by the manner in which his partner had cooperated with him, stated afterward that he considered Koltanowski as the second-best blindfold player in the world."

Here are two games from this unique exhibition:

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Alekhine & Koltanowski	Chessboard Chess Club
1. P–K4	P–QB4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. P–Q4	PXP
4. KtXP	P–Q3
5. Kt–QB3	P–KKt3
6. B–QKt5	B–Q2
7. O–O	B–Kt2
8. Kt–Kt3	Kt–B3
9. K–R1	O–O

10.	P–B4	Q–B2
11.	Q–K1	QR–B1
12.	P–QR3	KR–Q1
13.	Q–R4	P–K3
14.	B–Q3	Kt–K2
15.	B–K3	B–B3
16.	P–B5	KPXP
17.	PXP	QKt–Q4
18.	KtXKt	KtXKt
19.	B–KKt5	R–K1
20.	R–B3	B–Q2
21.	QR–KB1	R–K4
22.	PXP	BPXP
23.	R–B7	Kt–K6
24.	RXBch	KXR
25.	Q–R6ch?	

25 BXP! would have won immediately.

25.		K–Kt1
26.	BXKt	B–K3
27.	Kt–Q4	B–Q4
28.	B–KKt5	Q–Q2
29.	B–B6	R–R4
30.	Q–B4	R–B1
31.	P–B4	BXPch
32.	KXB	Q–R6ch
33.	K–Kt1	QXB
34.	Q–Kt3	QXBP

Adjudicated a win for White.

RUY LOPEZ

White	*Black*
Alekhine & Koltanowski	Flemish Chess Club
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–Kt5	P–QR3
4. BXKt	QPXB
5. P–Q4	B–KKt5
6. PXP	QXQch
7. KXQ	B–QB4
8. K–K2	Kt–K2
9. P–KR3	B–K3
10. P–QKt3	Kt–Kt3
11. P–Kt3	KtXP
12. B–K3	B–Q3
13. Kt–Q4	B–Q2
14. P–KB4	Kt–Kt3
15. Kt–Q2	P–QB4
16. KKt–B3	P–KB3
17. QR–Q1	R–Q1
18. Kt–B4	B–Kt4
19. KKt–Q2	K–B2
20. P–QR4	BXKtch
21. KtXB	P–Kt3
22. K–B3	KR–K1
23. P–R4	P–R3
24. P–R5	Kt–B1
25. R–Q5	B–K2
26. KR–Q1	RXR
27. RXR	R–Q1
28. RXR	BXR
29. P–K5	Kt–Q2
30. K–K4	P–QKt4
31. RPXP	RPXP
32. Kt–R5	B–K2
33. K–Q5	PXP
34. PXP, and wins	

The White King must penetrate to win one or more Pawns.

CHAPTER THREE

I Break the World's Blindfold Record

WHAT KIND OF TRAINING DOES A CHESS MASTER UNDERGO IN ORDER to prepare himself for an important match? How did you prepare yourself for your 34-board blindfold exhibition? I have been asked such questions repeatedly, and they bring back those months of preparation so clearly that I can imagine they are happening today.

Picture if you will a chess player named Koltanowski sitting moodily in the kitchen of a rented flat in the Irish capital. I am terribly irritated. Just listen, and you will agree with me—although my wife does not. You see, she has bought linoleum for the dining-room floor and it has blue and white squares. That irritates me. Here I am in training and, as part of that training, keeping away from chess and chessboards, and she makes me eat my meals with "chessboards" all around me. So I eat in the kitchen.

Let me try to explain what a blindfold exhibition represents. I sit with my back to the players and tell my moves to the teller, who goes from board to board making the moves for me. He tells me what moves my opponents have made. I give my replies as quickly as possible. I see no board and write nothing down on paper. This is pure memory, a kind of momentary memory which has been developed to such an extent that I can now play fifteen games simultaneously each day without feeling the strain.

A non-player told me recently that there are 318,979,654,000 possible ways of playing the first four moves of a chess game. This is indeed alarming news! What then would be the possible positions in four (or more!) moves of 30 simultaneous games? These I played on May 10, 1931, in Antwerp. True, I won 20 of those and drew 10, making a new blindfold record, but don't

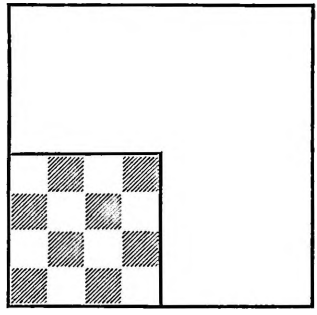
tell me that there were 30 times an astronomical number of positions to be visualized at once! No, there are always 30 positions tucked away in my mind during such an exhibition, and each position changes as moves are made. Should I forget one, then all I have to do is to remember the moves that have been made in that game thus far. Yes, I usually see every threat my opponents cook up, and it's never too hard to continue play in a complicated position. But getting started is something else.

It may be hard to believe, but before I start an exhibition I never know whether I'll be able to remember the positions. However, once started I feel myself possessed of an indescribable power which allows me to think clearly and to play even better chess than I can manage with the board and pieces in sight. Call it will-power if you wish, but when a situation arises which allows me to attempt a combination, I somehow feel that something is possible and manage to see very deeply into the position. Fortunately for me, perhaps, it is at such times that my being blindfolded helps me most of all. My opponents, often thinking that the blindfold player has forgotten the position or will not "see" their own threats, find weak moves, make them, and are badly beaten. Of course, such thinking on their part is to my advantage, but how many beautiful combinations have never been completed simply because my opponents failed to find the best defense!

My father never permitted me to emulate the Serbian, Tchabritch, by drawing a large chessboard on the ceiling of my room. For a while I played with the idea of tying one to the ceiling somehow, but finally gave up that notion too. It was impossible to follow Tchabritch's suggestions, and equally impossible to become a blindfold player without being able to visualize the board or any part of it. It was then that I hit upon the trick which has been my key to the chessboard ever since. I cut a board in four, and found that each quarter looked like the board on page 32.

Memorizing the quarter-board was easy. You should be able to do it yourself in five minutes or less. When QR1 is a black square, then QKt2, QB3 and Q4 are black as well. Or, if Q1 is a white square, then so are QB2, QKt3 and QR4. In half a day I had

learned the board well enough to name the color of any square, well enough to move the pieces about in my mind. And, a few days later, I found I was able to read a chess game as easily as a newspaper. After that, I played blindfold chess as easily as over-the-board chess. Try this method yourself. Remember, anyone who can play chess should be able to play at least one blindfold game without very much difficulty.



Soon, I was giving exhibitions all over the country and had created the Belgian record with 20 simultaneous games. My play over the board developed enormously, as did my blindfold play. I then received engagements all over Europe and managed to make a favorable impression everywhere. Sureness and quickness in a blindfold player astonishes everyone, making a blindfold exhibition an enjoyable experience for both chess players and non-players. Frankly, no one is ever more astonished than myself when the games are completed. I know how I do it, and yet I always wonder how I can manage it!

And there are no after-effects! The longer a display lasts, the stronger I play. Somehow my will-power develops with each move, and yet my mind, keyed to the tenseness of continuing struggle, is able to relax at the end of each exhibition. At first, I would turn off a mental electric switch by a system of auto-suggestion. "I sleep, I am sleeping, I am asleep!" Soon, I *was* asleep. No, my dreams are not tortured with insoluble chess problems, and never were. Today, I can fall asleep quite easily after an exhibition. Luckily, I never need more than five or six

hours of sleep, and then I'm always ready for another session. Strangely, I find myself most calm and most easily rested when I am playing chess regularly. Some of my musician friends tell me that they feel the same way while on a concert tour.

Simultaneously blindfold displays often have their awkward side. For me, there are two classes of people who make life difficult. First and most annoying of these is the strong player who loves to kibitz. Kibitzing, a universal chess term, applies to those players whose greatest joy is derived from the free bestowal of advice to all and sundry. It might not be so bad if a kibitzer would only confine his activities to one board. But they never do. In exhibition after exhibition, the wandering kibitzers search for good moves at one board after another, and never hesitate to whisper them to the embattled players. This makes my life very difficult. You see, as soon as I realize that a player at any given board is weak, I go all out for him, aiming at a quick mate or a big material win. Forcing the game is always dangerous, and it is just when I have the weak player deciding on a wrong line of defense that the good player seems to take a fiendish delight in pointing out to him the single, subtle win.

The other annoying class of player is made up of those who, although a queen, two rooks and some other pieces down, will not resign. "Who knows?" they must say to themselves, "They might have to carry the blindfold player off to a lunatic asylum. Then I would be credited with a win for this game." "Unsporting" is the word used by my British friends to describe such phenomena. Although I have never yet lost to such a player, I continue to encounter the type. Their logic has always escaped me.

One of the most unusual occurrences of my blindfold career took place during the season preceding the world record exhibition. I had been asked to donate my services in an exhibition at the Salisbury school in a very poor district of Liverpool. I accepted, wondering whether or not I was being tricked in some way. How glad I am that I accepted that invitation! The whole school turned up—students, faculty, and friends. Mothers, fathers, and hundreds of neighborhood workers joined with the boys of this and other schools to afford me the most satisfying afternoon

of my life. Best of all, every one of my opponents was less than eleven years old. It was an unforgettable session, and I can still see those children concentrating more deeply than ever before in their school lives.

But now I am in training for my 34-board exhibition. My training consists in taking long walks, drinking plenty of milk, seeing no chessboards and working out a system to segregate the boards—King's Pawn on the first six, Queen's Pawn on the second six, and so on.

Most important of all my rules, I feel, is the prohibition of chess or chessboards in any form. Still, what is the use of arguing with my wife?

And so, I am irritated!

Such was my regimen for the six months I spent in Dublin before the record exhibition in Edinburgh, Scotland, on September 20, 1937. When I came to Scotland I was indeed physically fit for the great mental strain that 34 games represent. That I succeeded is mostly due to the good care my wife had taken of me. (Yes, she is a wonderful cook!) The only chess on my mind had been that involved in preparing the opening moves for each of the 34 boards. Each group of five boards was opened in a different manner, and I knew what I was going to play against any one of a number of possible defenses.

(This may be a good place to tell a little story. Can you imagine my surprise upon arriving in Portland, Oregon, for an exhibition in 1943, to learn that I was booked to play 35 games blindfold—just like that! No warning, no thought that it might be a difficult feat, especially with two months of touring behind me. The club secretary who had organized the exhibition saw it as a fairly simple affair. If I had played 34 games, it shouldn't be too hard to play one more! I soon convinced him of his error and played the games simultaneously over the board.)

The exhibition was organized by the Stockbridge Chess Club and sponsored by W. S. Murphy, the promoter of Everyman's Pools. Play took place in the Albyn Rooms, with R. D. Dykes and R. F. D. Hayman as Tellers and F. R. Gould, I. Hamilton and

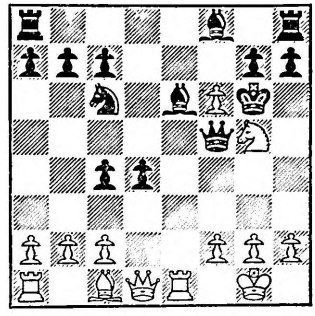
R. R. Stevenson as Controllers. Here is the tabulation of the boards!

1.	W. Allan	½	18.	Miss Kessen	0
2.	G. Baker	0	19.	R. Laing	½
3.	Mrs. Brockett	½	20.	Miss Lamb	0
4.	A. G. Burnett	0	21.	Mrs. M'Farlane	0
5.	J. Cairns	0	22.	Miss Mason	0
6.	Miss Crum	0	23.	R. J. M'Robbie	0
7.	Miss M'D. Clark	0	24.	Mrs. Prenter	0
8.	R. D. Ewart	0	25.	Mrs. Ritchie	0
9.	W. Geddes	½	26.	A. J. Smith	0
10.	H. D. Gemmell	0	27.	G. Stott	½
11.	Miss Gilchrist	0	28.	F. B. T. Salvesen	½
12.	F. Gould	0	29.	Miss F. Tweedie	0
13.	W. W. Graham	½	30.	M. Todd	0
14.	G. P. Granger	0	31.	Miss M. Tweedie	½
15.	A. Henderson	0	32.	W. Wells	0
16.	Miss Henderson	0	33.	J. Wilkes	½
17.	D. S. Hood	½	34.	W. L. Thomson	0

EDINBURGH, SEPT. 20, 1937

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	A. G. Burnett (Boy Champion of Scotland)
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–B3
5. P–Q4	PXP
6. P–K5	P–Q4
7. PXKt	PXB
8. R–K1ch	B–K3
9. Kt–Kt5	Q–Q4
10. Kt–QB3	Q–B4
11. QKt–K4	B–KB1
12. KtXKBP	KXKt
13. Kt–Kt5ch	K–Kt3



14. KtXB

The theoretical continuation here is 14 RXB, but I wanted to bring my opponent into the open.

14.		PXP
15.	P–KKt4	Q–QR4

16. **B–Q2** **Q–Kt3**

16....B–Kt5 was better.

17. **Q–B3** **B–K2**
18. **Q–B5ch**

This and the following five moves were announced together. I mention this, not because it is unusual for a chess master, but because of the occasion.

18. **K–B2**
19. **Q–R5ch** **K–Kt1**
20. **Q–R6**

Threatening mate on Black's Kt2.

20. **B–B1**
21. **QXBP** **Kt–K2**
22. **B–R6** **BXB**
23. **QXB** Resigns

Black loses both of his Rooks.

CHAPTER FOUR

European Reminiscences

INCLINATION AND, LATER, NECESSITY HAVE MADE ME A WANDERER over the face of the earth. Born in Belgium, my early chess career took me to country after country in Europe. I played and gave exhibitions from Ostend to Constantinople. I was in Spain at the outbreak of the Spanish Civil War, and remained there during much of the war. I came to the New World, travelled widely throughout South and Central America, and have finally found my home here in the United States. This chess player is one new citizen who knows the meaning of that sanctuary for the homeless—the United States of America.

Wherever I was, wherever I went, I played chess. I discovered how passionate the members of small European clubs were in their devotion to the game and how everyone in a Guatemalan village would turn out to see a chess master. Everywhere, it seems, adventure and anecdote awaited me. Today, I prefer to remember the little people of the world, its citizen chess players. Let's travel through Europe's chess clubs, discovering them in one country after another.

BELGIUM

Belgian newspapers have always been kind to me. *Le Vingtième Siècle* of Brussels, after an exhibition on April 6, 1936, in that city, printed the following statement I made to their reporter:

"Laissez-moi vous dire de prime abord que le jeu à l'aveugle (c'est à dire sans voir l'échiquier, et sans que la position soit rappelée à aucun moment) ne signifie pas que celui qui le pratique est d'une force exceptionelle. Ce n'est en vérité qu'une acrobatie de la mémoire, sans le moindre truquage, que force l'admiration du joueur inexpérimente, tandis que la profane reste confondu."

In answer to a question regarding the possibility for brilliance on the part of the blindfold player, I was able to assure the readers of *Le Vingtième Siècle* that the usual opposition in a simultaneous exhibition is weaker than that in a masters' tournament, and that a master, blindfolded or not, will often find a brilliant win against a less experienced and less capable opponent. All the blindfold player has to bear in mind is that no opponent is so weak that his weakness justifies a departure from theoretically sound chess.

Here is a good example of what can happen, in a game described as a brilliancy by J. C. Thompson of the Dallas *Morning News* when he discussed it in his excellent chess column on September 22, 1941. The victim is my boyhood chum, Dunkelblum.

10-BOARD EXHIBITION—ANTWERP, 1929

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	P. Dunkelblum
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–B3
5. P–Q4	

I rarely play the Max Lange attack, which is initiated by this move, except in blindfold play. Somehow, and I am at a complete loss to explain why, I feel more at ease on the White side of this opening than with most others. Can you explain it? Is it the joy of sacrificing?

5.	PXP
6. P–K5	P–Q4
7. PXKt	PXB
8. R–K1ch	B–K3
9. Kt–Kt5	Q–Q4

Black plays along the standard line of defense. His last move is necessary to prevent the loss of a piece after White's KtXB and Q–R5ch.

10. Kt–QB3	Q–B4
11. QKt–K4	B–QKt5?

Black's best move is undoubtedly 11....O–O–O. With this unusual move Black successfully departs from the usual lines of play. However, White now has time to break up Black's strong Pawn-position in the center.

12. P–QB3	PXP
13. PXP	B–R4
14. P–KKt4	Q–Kt3

Black certainly cannot afford to win the Pawn, as after 14.... QXP; 15 QXQ, BXQ; 16 PXP White wins at least an exchange.

15. KtXB	PXKt
16. P–B7ch	KXP?

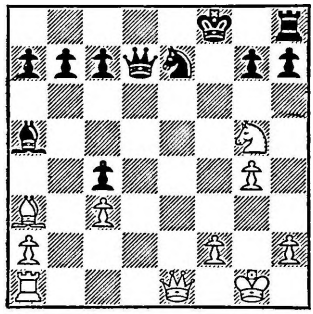
16....QXP was much better, and would have avoided much of

the troubles which now descend upon Black's bared head.

17.	Kt—Kt5ch	K—Kt1
18.	RXP	Q—Q6
19.	Q—K1!	R—KB1
20.	R—K8!	Q—Q2

White was threatening 21 Q—K6 mate.

21.	RXRch	KXR
22.	B—R3ch	Kt—K2



23. R—Q1!

The exclamation marks now fall thick and fast. You must forgive the apparent lack of modesty, but please consider that the Queen-chase which follows is one of the most interesting endings in which I have ever been involved, and the final position is indeed a curiosity!

23.		QXPch
24.	K—B1!!	

Played to avoid a check on Black's 25th move.

24.		QXKt
25.	R—Q5!!	Q—R5

25 . . . . QXR permits White to mate in two moves.

26.	R—KR5!!	Q—B3

Black must continue to protect his Kt. Alas, however, the advances of the White Rook are no longer to be denied!

27. R—KB5! Resigns

Not every game permits the sort of combination I was able to achieve against Dunkelblum. Many players attempt solid defenses and force me to play positional chess. What they fail to realize is that they are also forcing themselves to play positionally. The result is often a collapse of their positions as the end-game approaches. Here is a good example of this, in a game played in Antwerp in 1936, part of an exhibition in which I played against eight consulting teams of two players each.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	R. Janssens & L. van Geyt
1. P—K4	P—QB3
2. Kt—KB3	P—Q4
3. P—Q3	

More usual, and perhaps better, is 3 Kt—QB3. The move played is justified even though it temporarily blocks the KB, for Black's position is such that he has only two moves, 3 . . . . B—Kt5 or 3 . . . . PXP. If the former, then White would force the opening

of the game with 4 P–KR3. Black chooses the latter alternative.

3.		PXP
4.	Kt–Kt5	Kt–B3
5.	Kt–QB3	B–B4
6.	PXP!	QXQch
7.	KXQ	B–Kt3

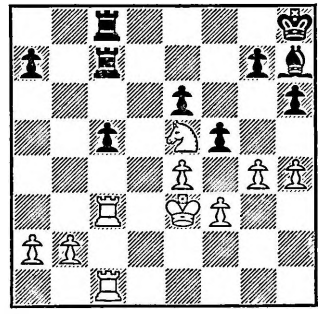
This piece will remain impotent for the remainder of the game. The Bishop would have done better to have returned home.

8.	P–B3	P–K3
9.	Kt–R3	P–KR3
10.	Kt–B4	B–R2
11.	P–KR4	QKt–Q2
12.	B–K3	B–QB4
13.	BXB	KtXB
14.	Kt–Q3	R–Q1
15.	K–Q2	O–O
16.	K–K3	KtXKt

Completing White's development for him. Better would have been 16 . . . . QKt–Q2.

17.	PXKt	P–QKt3
18.	P–Q4	Kt–R4
19.	P–KKt4	Kt–Kt6
20.	R–KKt1	KtXBch
21.	QRXKt	R–Q2
22.	R–QB1	KR–Q1
23.	Kt–K2	R–QB2
24.	R–B3	P–QB4
25.	PXP	PXP
26.	KR–QB1	KR–QB1
27.	Kt–B4	K–R1
28.	Kt–Q3	P–B4
29.	Kt–K5	

Black's QBP can be captured at will.



29.		PXKP
30.	PXP	B–Kt1
31.	P–QKt4	P–B5
32.	RXP	RXR
33.	RXR	RXR
34.	KtXR	P–K4
35.	KtXP	BXP
36.	K–Q4	K–Kt1
37.	Kt–B6	Resigns

Black cannot prevent the loss of his QRP, after which White will march the QKtP down to win.

Holland

The traditional hospitality of the Dutch is nowhere more evident than in their loving treatment of visiting chess masters. This little country, containing many times more chess players per square mile than any of the American nations, has been the willing host to most of the world's chess masters. Enthusiastic, studious—Holland publishes a dozen times as many chess books as this country—and well organized in innumerable clubs and

chess societies, the Dutch succeed in making each visit more memorable than the last. But then, what is more natural in a land where chess events make the headlines regularly? Here is a sample from the *Nieuwe Bussumsche Courant* of May 1, 1938:

"SCHAKEN UIT HET HOOFD.
"GEORG KOLTANOWSKI SPEELT IN 'T B.S.G., 12 PARTYEN BLIND EN VERLIEST ER GEEN ENKELE VAN!

"Maar men kan in de schaakwereld ook regelrecht wonderen beleven. Iets waarvan men, laten we zeggen als normaal mensch, moet toegeven:m'n verstand staat er by stil. Zooiets maakten wy Woensdag-avond mede, toen het Buss. Schaakgenootschap ons gastvry een plaatsje aanbood by de verrichtingen van den wereldkampioen blind-speler Georg Koltanowski.

"Het spelen van een party uit het hoofd is al reeds een prachtige geheugenarbeid. Wat nu zeggen van een Koltanowski die . . . twaalf partyen uit 't hoofd schaakt? Op elk moment willekeurig welk bord den stand stukken te zeggen, neen sterker nog:het verloop der geheele party in vlot tempo opnoemt! Er is maar een woord voor:wonder-baarlyk!"

Yes, the Dutch press, like the Dutch players, are given to such rave notices, for they love the game as do no other people in Western Europe!

Here is a game from the exhibition referred to above. My anonymous opponent welcomes the Max Lange and helps me to make it sparkle a bit.

BUSSUM, HOLLAND—APRIL 30, 1938

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Mynheer "X"
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	Kt–B3
4. O–O	B–B4
5. P–Q4	PXP
6. P–K5	Kt–KKt5

This piece will have to return home, either to KR3 or KB3. Best, of course, is 6 . . . . P–Q4.

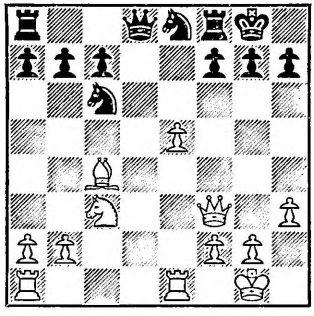
7. B–B4	P–Q4
8. PXPe.p.	BXP
9. R–K1ch	B–K2
10. P–B3	O–O

Black prefers to get his King into safety and therefore returns the Pawn.

11. PXP	Kt–B3
12. Kt–B3	B–Q3
13. B–K5	B–KKt5
14. P–KR3	BXKt?

This makes it too easy for the blindfold player. Better would be 14 . . . . B–R4.

15.	QXB	BXB
16.	PXB	Kt–K1



17. P–K6!

White now takes complete command of the game.

17.		Kt–Q3
18.	PXPch	KtXP
19.	QR–Q1	Q–B3
20.	QXQ	PXQ
21.	R–Q7	QR–B1
22.	Kt–Q5	QKt–K4
23.	RXKt(K5)!	

A little surprise which finishes the game. If 23 . . . . PXR; Kt–K7ch and KtXR wins a piece. Black saves this piece by permitting himself to be mated.

23.		KtXR
24.	KtXP dbl ch	K–R1
25.	RXRP mate	

The town of Middelburg ranks high in my long list of pleasant Dutch towns. Its amazingly active group of players has played host to me on several occasions, the last in 1938.

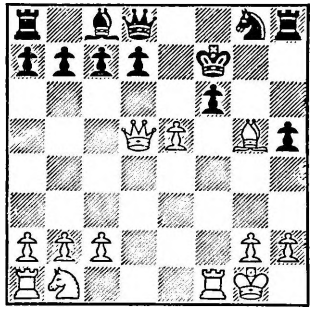
So pleasant was the atmosphere which surrounded me upon my arrival at Middelburg that I entered upon my 15-board blindfold exhibition determined to give the boys something worth remembering. Sure enough, the opportunity presented itself when one of my opponents stepped into a pretty trap in the Max Lange. All the variations in the final position were announced, and resulted in immediate resignation.

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Mynheer "X"
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	Kt–B3
4. O–O	B–B4
5. P–Q4	BXP
6. KtXB	KtXKt
7. P–B4	Kt–B3?

Black must play 7 . . . . P–Q3. Now for the fireworks!

8.	BXPch!	KXB
9.	PXP	Kt–K2
10.	PXKt	PXP
11.	B–Kt5	Kt–Kt1
12.	P–K5	P–KR4
13.	Q–Q5ch	Resigns



(A) If 13 . . . . K–B1; 14 BXP, KtXB; 15 RXKtch, etc.

(B) If 13 . . . . K–K1; 14 RXP, KtXR; 15 BXKt, etc.

(C) If 13 . . . . K–Kt3; 14 BXP, KtXB; 15 RXKtch, K–Kt4; 16 P–KR4ch.

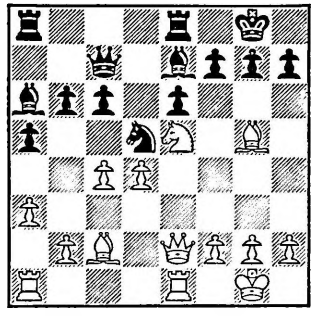
(D) If 13 . . . . K–Kt2; 14 PX Pch, K–Kt3; 15 P–B7, QXB; 16 PXKt(Q)ch.

An earlier tour of the Netherlands included an 8-board exhibition at Breda on February 10, 1935. One of the games, highlighted by a final position in which Black suddenly finds himself smothered by his own pieces, remains fresh in my mind:

SLAV DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Mynheer "X"
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. P–QB4	P–QB3
3. P–K3	Kt–B3
4. Kt–QB3	P–K3
5. Kt–B3	B–K2
6. B–Q3	O–O
7. O–O	QKt–Q2
8. P–K4	PXKP
9. KtXP	KtXKt
10. BXKt	Kt–B3
11. B–B2	Q–B2
12. B–KKt5	P–QKt3
13. Q–K2	P–QR4
14. P–QR3	B–R3
15. KR–K1	KR–K1
16. Kt–K5	Kt–Q4?

Permitting White to force a quick finish. Instead, 16 . . . . P–KR3 was called for.



17. BXRPch K–B1

If 17 . . . . KXB, then 18 Q–R5ch, K–Kt1; 19 QXPch, followed by 20 PXKt.

18. Kt–Kt6ch! PXKt
19. QXP Resigns

Black cannot forestall the threatened mate on KKt8.

France

Frenchmen are, it seems, more easily given to superlatives in thought and friendship than any other European people. One can hardly accuse them of the highest level of general chess ability, but their love of the spectacular results in record attendances at most chess events. I am reminded of an exhibition given in Dunkerque in July, 1938, when the municipal hall was filled to overflowing by a capacity crowd which probably contained as many non-players as it did those who understood what was happening. A local paper, *Le Nord Maritime,* described the affair in words of amazement.

"TOURNANT le dos aux échiquiers, dans une attitude absolument désinvolte et au milieu de la fumée des cigarettes, sans interruption, le maître conduisait ses 10 parties avec une tranquillité déconcertante pour ses adversaires, auxquels il adressait quelques plaisanteries lorsque la position lui paraissait intéressante.

"Mais où l'étonnement du publique fut à son comble, c'est quand au bout d'une heure et demie de jeu, alors qu'une vingtaine de coups avaient été joués, à la demande du public, la position de toutes les pièces sur les échiquiers qui lui étaient désignés, ainsi que tous les coups qui s'étaient succédés au cours d'une partie.

"On reste confondu devant de telles possibilités . . ."

Germany

Among my earliest blindfold appearances in foreign lands were my frequent trips to Germany. Perhaps I should confess that I found Cologne and other nearby cities extremely pleasant. In any event, I had been there often enough to have achieved an adequate command of the German language by 1924. In that year one George Koltanowski, like the youths of most European countries, was serving his period of compulsory military service. Early in the year I had been sent from Namur to Ruhrort, a very small town not far from Duisburg, a major industrial city of the Ruhr valley. In fact, all one had to do was to cross two large bridges and walk a few miles and you were out of the suburbs and in the city.

My platoon was part of the Belgian Hospital Service. As is so often the case in all armies, we had been planted in a spot in which we had nothing to do. Garrison duty in an empty hospital

meant little more than KP duty. My specialty soon became peeling potatoes, a task which consumed about two hours each day. For the rest, it was a question of killing time, which I consumed in composing and solving chess problems. Of course, my easy life was made even easier by the fact that my captain was a rabid chess fan who looked upon the presence of the Belgian Champion in his platoon as a stroke of luck which had to be capitalized upon. We played whenever he had the time, and my frequent liberties may perhaps be laid to the apparent improvement of the play of one of the greatest duffers of all time.

We were stationed at one of the frontier points of the Belgian occupation area, and had to be on our guard at all times against an increasingly ugly public resentment of our presence. Among the regulations was one prohibiting any soldier from being out alone at night. Although we ducked out whenever we could, Ruhrort was hardly a pleasant place for a soldier seeking amusement. I soon engaged in a hunt for real chess opposition, but could find none in the town.

It took a little time, but eventually I got a pass signed by my captain which enabled me to pass over the bridges into Duisburg. The hunt for chess players was on! After two hours, I found the place I had been looking for, a well-established coffeehouse called Zum Weissen Rossel. Chess players gathered in the back rooms of this tavern regularly, and, as luck would have it, the local chess club was meeting there that night! I ordered a coffee and watched a few of the games. No one, it seemed, noticed my presence, probably due to the tacit avoidance of foreign troops so common in the Ruhr.

After some time I asked the winner of a game, in German, whether he would care to play me a game. He asked me how strongly I played, and I told him that I would like to play the local champion. He raised his eyebrows and walked to the other end of the room, where a whispered conference was soon under way. I sat where I was, more than a little uneasy under the gaze of several dozen chess players who all seemed to be plotting some quick end to this villain in a Belgian Army uniform.

He was back in a few minutes, and announced that he would get Herr Schmidt, the club champion, to play with me. Soon, an elderly gentleman came over, announced that he was Schmidt,

and sat down. We chose for colors and he, as White, started to play in an orthodox manner. I played solidly, but realized in a few minutes that my opponent was a rank novice. I glanced about me nervously at the glaring onlookers. What sort of trap was this?

I decided to play carefully and win by the slightest possible margin. Exchange followed exchange until I finally won the game by the advantage of one extra pawn in the ending. Schmidt bowed stiffly and walked away, to be replaced at once by another player who also announced that he was Schmidt. What game were they playing with me? The second Schmidt was a better player than the first, but still not the sort one would expect to be the champion of a large city. Once again I played carefully and once again I won, thanks to the queening of an extra pawn in the ending.

By this time most of the players in the room had gathered about my table, and I immediately found myself playing against a third "Schmidt."

The game was clear now. No physical danger, no threat to my life, no trapping of an unwary young enemy soldier was involved in these queer doings. They were merely trying to find out how well I played! Well, two could play at that game. If they were going to put up a better man each time, I would make each of them look as weak as the last! I worked hard, and won again by the advantage of a single pawn. They were flabbergasted. If I had beaten Schmidt I by a mere pawn, then Schmidt II should have beaten me. And, if Schmidt II had also lost by one pawn, then Schmidt III should certainly have smashed me. Something was definitely wrong!

Finally, a fourth player sat down opposite me. "I am Schmidt," he said. "Hans Schmidt!" Here, at last, was the real McCoy. He played well, but not well enough to avoid losing by one little pawn. This was too much for the hitherto silent crowd of kibitzers. Most of them started talking at once, to one another, to me, to "Schmidt." Who was I? Koltanowski? The Belgian Champion? Suddenly they were a happy, friendly crew of comrades. A stein of beer was placed in my hand, and a spokesman began to plead with me.

They were playing an important match with Düsseldorf the next Sunday. Wouldn't I be happy to play first board for them? They would supply me with civilian clothes and a *nom de guerre.* Düsseldorf was beyond Belgian occupation territory, but they would sneak me through the lines and see to it that no harm came to me. Düsseldorf was an ancient rival, and no match was ever so important.

I had to refuse, but was able to arrange a blindfold exhibition on eight boards for a night two weeks later, providing I could get permission (which I did) from my captain. Quite happy, they escorted me to the bridges. The pawn-advantage joke has remained a favorite at the Duisburg Chess Club, where I still have many good friends.

Here is a game from the Duisburg exhibition, played on November 15, 1924:

FRENCH DEFENSE

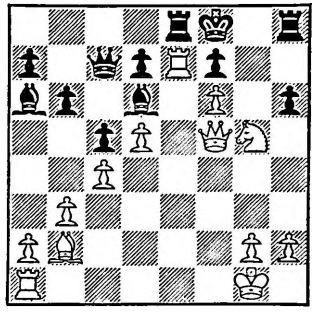
White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Schmidt?
1. P–K4	P–K3
2. P–Q4	P–QB4
3. P–Q5	

Black's second move, permitting this pawn advance, is far inferior to the accepted 2.... P–Q4.

3.	Q–B2
4. P–KB4	PXP
5. PXP	B–Q3

Black plays in an original manner peculiar to this Duisburg crowd. It seems he doesn't believe in the much-advertised ability of blindfold players.

6. Kt–KR3	Kt–QR3
7. P–B4	Kt–B3
8. B–Q3	Kt–QKt5
9. O–O	KtXB
10. QXKt	P–KR3
11. R–K1ch	K–B1
12. Kt–B3	P–QKt3
13. Kt–K4	KtXKt
14. QXKt	Q–Q1
15. P–B5	R–KKt1
16. P–B6	P–KKt4
17. Q–B5	R–KR1
18. P–QKt3	B–R3
19. B–Kt2	Q–B2
20. R–K7!	R–K1
21. KtXKtP!?	



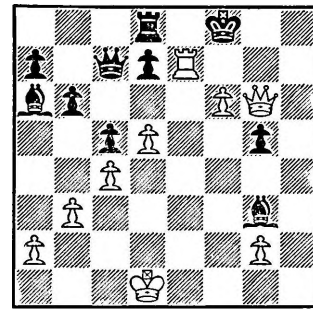
21. BXPch

21 . . . . PXKt leads to the same finish.

22.	**K–B1**	**PXKt**
23.	**QR–K1**	**R–Q1**
24.	**RXBPch!**	**KXR**
25.	**R–K7ch**	**K–B1**
26.	**B–K5!!**	

The key to the whole combination. The Black Queen must be blockaded!

26.		**BXB**
27.	**Q–Kt6**	**R–R8ch**
28.	**K–K2**	**R–K8ch**
29.	**KXR**	**B–Kt6ch**
30.	**K–Q1**	Resigns



Spain

Chess master though I was, the game was never able to offer me as good a living as I was able to derive from my family's traditional craft, diamond cutting. My chess activities, therefore, flowed and ebbed with the fortunes of Belgium's considerable diamond industry. The off-season in diamonds was my most active season in chess, and vice versa. With the coming of the worldwide depression in the early 1930s, the diamond industry entered into a serious slump, and I began to hunt for good chess tournaments and clubs which would provide me with exhibitions.

A notice in a Dutch chess column early in 1934 announced an international tournament in Sitges, near Barcelona, Spain. I wrote the sponsors and was happy to learn that they would accept my entry and pay my expenses to, from, and during the event. They also agreed to arrange three blindfold exhibitions. I didn't realize the good fortune which took me to Sitges until after my arrival in Spain.

This was the climate all men must dream of. Rainy, foggy Belgium had never witnessed such clear and sunny days. The food was beyond comparison and, best of all, the people of Catalonia made each visitor feel like a native. As for the tournament, it proved to be exceptionally strong, and I feel that my sharing third prize with Tartakower was quite an achievement. Our hosts probably enjoyed the contest even more than the visit-

ing masters did, for they soon arranged another tournament in Barcelona. In this one Lilienthal, Tartakower, and I shared first prize. Soon other tournaments were being arranged; the season promised to be full of chess and more chess. Alas, the agenda was too full for even one of my promised blindfold exhibitions! At last, the Club de Escac of Barcelona arranged an 8-board display on the day before I was to leave for home. At first quizzical, then surprised, they finished the evening totally delighted by the spectacle. The officials gathered about me with radiant faces. I had to come back. They would organize a complete tour of Spain. I had to spend a season with them as teacher and trainer of the club.

Back in Belgium, I found the diamond business unimproved and showing little promise for the immediate future. Back I went to Spain, there to spend two of the happiest years of my life. After one year in Barcelona, I went on to Madrid as teacher for the Madrid Chess Club. I might have remained there indefinitely had it not been for the Civil War.

The Catalans and the Basques are among the finest friends I ever made. These courageous and intelligent people, living a hard life in a difficult land, still succeed in maintaining that cameraderie for which their provinces are justly famous. Since they enjoyed chess, it was to them but natural that it be supported fully. So enthusiastically did the chess population of the country greet my tours that I can truthfully claim to have visited every city and most of the towns in Spain. From Cadiz to Sevilla to Alicante to La Coruña to San Sebastian to Fraguel to Lerida —all of Spain threw its doors open to me. In Rosas, a small fishing village, the fishing fleet did not leave the harbor on the evening of my exhibition. The whole village was there to see the show. Chess players, women, policemen, and stray dogs crowded the hall and made the evening an event never to be forgotten. This spontaneous demonstration of interest was a finer tribute than most of the exhibitions in the famous Country Club of Madrid, with its nobility, government officials and high fee.

I have often been asked whether I would ever like to return to Europe. Questions like that are very difficult to answer, but if ever I do go back, I would want it to be to some such place as

the town of Pelafruge, Catalonia. Who could ask for more than anchovies galore, the blue Mediterranean, the friendliest people in the world, and countless chess lovers? But these glories are gone forever, and sad Spain will never recover from its present troubles. Life can never be the same after the spirit of a nation's people has been crushed. No, I have no intention of going back to Europe to live!

While in Spain, I played my shortest game:

10-BOARD EXHIBITION—BARCELONA, 1936

PHILIDOR DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Señor "X"
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	P–Q3
3. P–Q4	B–Kt5
4. PXP	BXKt
5. QXB	PXP
6. B–QB4	Kt–KB3
7. Q–QKt3	P–QKt3?

Sometimes the blindfold player can be very lucky!

8. BXPch	K–Q2
9. Q–K6 mate	

8-BOARD EXHIBITION—MATARO, JUNE 24, 1934

CARO-KANN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Señor "X"
1. P–K4	P–QB3
2. P–Q4	P–Q4
3. PXP	PXP
4. B–Q3	Kt–QB3
5. P–QB3	P–K3?

This move, blocking the QB, is inferior to 5 . . . . P–K4.

6. Kt–B3	Kt–KB3
7. O–O	B–Q3
8. R–K1	O–O
9. B–KKt5	P–KKt3?

This move, creating lasting weaknesses at KB3 and KR3, is the source of Black's quick punishment. A Pawn-formation such as this, with Pawns at K3, KB2, KKt3, KR2, is in general to be avoided.

10. Kt–K5	R–K1
11. P–KR4	B–K2
12. Kt–Q2	Kt–KR4
13. P–KKt4!	BXB
14. PXB	KtXKt

On 14 . . . . QXP, White would win a piece by Kt(Q2)–B3.

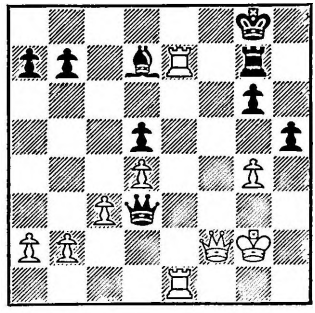
15. RXKt	P–B3
16. PXP	KtXP
17. Q–B3	R–B1
18. Q–Kt3	Q–K2
19. K–Kt2	R–B2
20. R–KR1	R–Kt2
21. P–KB4	B–Q2

22.	Kt–B3	R–QB1
23.	Kt–Kt5	R–K1
24.	R(1)–K1	Q–Q3
25.	Q–R4	P–KR3!
26.	KtXKP!	RXKt
27.	RXR	QXP

If 27 . . . . BXR, 28 QXKt wins.

28.	QXKt	Q–Q7ch
29.	Q–B2	QXB
30.	R–K7	P–KR4

White here announced mate in five moves.



31.	RXRch	KXR
32.	R–K7ch	K–R3
33.	Q–B4ch	P–Kt4
34.	Q–B8ch	K–Kt3
35.	Q–Kt7 mate	

Blindfold play is a great attraction, but it should not be regarded as anything more. A good show, it usually gets onlookers and contestants into a good mood. But when a player continues to play on in spite of a lost game, be he a Queen and two Rooks down or several Pawns down in a simple ending, then all enjoyment goes, for the blindfold player as well as for the audience.

In an exhibition at Manzanares, Spain, I started at 11 P.M. against eight boards. By 2 A.M. I had won three games and drawn one. Four wood-shifters played on, each of them at least a Queen behind. I was tired, and had to catch a train at 6 A.M. for the next stop on my tour. The spectators were starting to leave, and I decided to teach the boys a lesson.

"Señores!" I said. "You are good Spaniards. You may be caballeros, or picadors. You may have knives in your belts, and tempers as sharp as the edges of your blades. No matter! I am going to be as rude to you as you are to me. I am going to sleep!"

And so I did. I awoke at 5:15 A.M.—and they were still there! I resumed play, mating one on the second move and the others a few moves later. The officials of the club managed to get me to the railroad station safely. They were wild with anger, but I was just as angry. I regard the hurried minutes of that morning as my private foretaste of the intensity with which these people

were to defend themselves in the Spanish Civil War two years later.

In the following game from this mad exhibition, the play, of course, is not perfectly sound, but it is unusual in that White sacrifices everything except his King!

8-BOARD EXHIBITION—MANZANARES

CARO-KANN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Señor "X"
1. P–K4	P–QB3
2. P–Q4	P–QKt4

What's this? This man is up to something. Watch him!

3. Kt–KB3	P–QR3
4. Kt–B3	P–K3
5. B–Q3	B–Q3

Either he's trying to make a monkey out of me or he plays like one himself! Let him have some more rope.

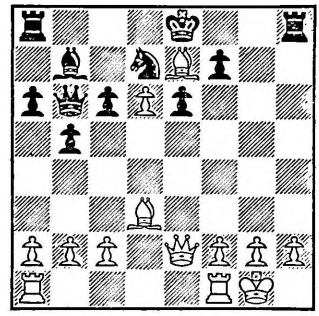
6. P–K5	B–B2
7. Kt–K4	P–Q3
8. O–O	PXP
9. PXP	Kt–Q2
10. B–KB4	P–KR3
11. Q–K2	P–KKt4
12. KKtXP!	

He actually forces me to sacrifice the piece! If 12 B–Kt3, then he will play P–Kt5, and my KP will be lost.

12.	PXKt
13. BXP	Kt–K2
14. Kt–Q6ch	BXKt

If 14 . . . . K–B1, then 15 Q–B3 kills.

15. PXB	B–Kt2
16. BXKt	Q–Kt3



17. QXKP!	R–KKt1

Naturally, Black cannot play 17 . . . . PXQ, because of 18 B–Kt6 mate.

18. Q–R6	P–QB4

What's this? Black is threatening to win by RXPch, RXBPch, R–Kt7ch, and R–Kt6, followed by mate!

19. P–KKt3	Kt–K4

Now it is Black who is going to town. I've got to meet these threats quickly! Oh these unpredictable Spaniards!

20. B–K2	P–B5
21. QR–K1	Q–B3
22. P–KB3	Kt–Kt5

There's that man again! Surely this is not the same opponent who played the first 16 moves? I'd better snap out of this before this games goes West.

23.	**P–Q7ch!**	**KXB**

If 23.... QXP, then 24 PXKt. If 23.... KXP, then 24 QXQ, followed by 25 PXKt.

24.	**QXQ**	**BXQ**
25.	**PXKt**	**B–Q4**

With the Queens exchanged, Black is now definitely lost. On 25.... KXP, 26 RXPch would win. On 25.... K–B1, 26 B–B3 would make the ending simple.

26.	**BXPch**	**B–K3**
27.	**RXBPch!**	**KXR**
28.	**BXBch**	**K–Kt2**
29.	**BXR**	**KXB**
30.	**R–K8ch**	Resigns

What a game!

10-BOARD EXHIBITION—SANTANDER, 1935

SLAV DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Señor "X"
1. **P–Q4**	**P–Q4**
2. **P–QB4**	**P–QB3**
3. **P–K3**	**Kt–KB3**
4. **Kt–QB3**	**P–K3**
5. **Kt–B3**	**QKt–Q2**
6. **B–Q3**	**B–K2**
7. **O–O**	**O–O**
8. **Q–K2**	

8 P–K4 is usually played here.

8.		**PXP**
9.	**BXP**	**P–QRt4**
10.	**B–Q3**	**P–QR3**
11.	**P–K4**	**P–Kt5**
12.	**Kt–Kt1**	**P–B4**

Black plays well, adopting a solid defense which yields White no advantage.

13.	**R–Q1**	**Q–Kt3**
14.	**B–K3**	**B–Kt2**
15.	**QKt–Q2**	**KR–Q1**
16.	**Kt–B4**	**Q–B2**
17.	**QR–B1**	

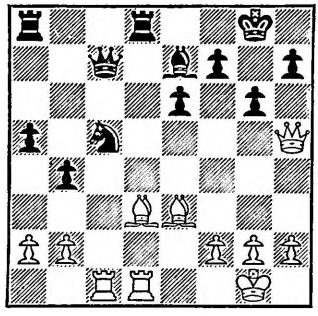
With the game apparently creeping along to a modest draw, I decided to sacrifice a Pawn and liven things up a bit.

17.		**KtXP**
18.	**Kt(4)–K5**	**Kt(5)–B3**
19.	**KtXKt**	**KtXKt**
20.	**PXP**	**BXKt**

Black weakens. His QB was too valuable a piece to be exchanged in this manner. Better was 20.... QR–B1.

21.	**QXB**	**KtXP**
22.	**Q–R5**	**P–Kt3?**

22.... P–KB4 was essential. Black now receives a nasty surprise!



23.	R×Kt!	B×R
24.	Q×B	Q×Q
25.	B×Q	R–Q4

If Black manages to double his Rooks on the Q file, White is lost.

26.	B–K7	R–R2
27.	B–B6	R(2)–Q2

Black has managed to double the Rooks, but . . . .

28.	R–QB1!!	Resigns

If 28 . . . . R×B; 29 R–B8ch, R–Q1; 30 R×Rch, R×R; 31 B×R wins.

10-BOARD EXHIBITION—LA CORUNA, SEPTEMBER, 1935

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Señor "X"
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–B3
5. P–Q4	Kt×QP?

This is probably the weakest method of capturing the Pawn. To begin with, it does not win it. More significant, it puts no obstacles at all in the way of White's developing attack.

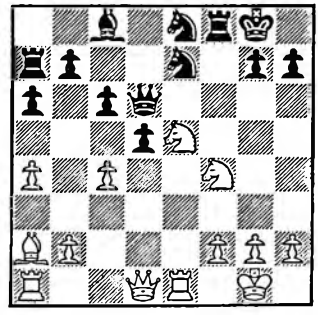
6.	Kt×P	O–O
7.	Kt–Q3	B–Kt3
8.	P–K5	Kt–K1

8 . . . . Kt–K5 would permit B–Q5.

9.	P–QR4	P–QR3
10.	Kt–B3	P–Q3
11.	Kt–Q5	B–R2
12.	B–K3	P–QB3
13.	Kt(5)–B4	P–Q4
14.	B–R2	P–B3
15.	P–QB3	P×P
16.	Kt×KP	Kt–B4
17.	B×B	R×B
18.	P–B4!	

With this move White breaks through Black's strong defense lines.

18.		Q–Q3
19.	R–K1	Kt–K2



20. P×P!

White's oncoming attack is well worth a piece.

20.		RXKt
21.	PXPch	K–R1
22.	Kt–B7ch	RXKt
23.	BXR	QXQ
24.	QRXQ	Resigns

Black must lose a few pieces. Simple, wasn't it?

8-BOARD EXHIBITION—TARRAGONA

NOVEMBER, 1935

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Señor "X"
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–KB3
5. P–Q4	BXP
6. KtXB	KtXKt
7. P–B4	Kt–K3?

7 . . . . P–Q3 is called for. This inaccuracy, like most opening blunders, is speedily punished.

8.	PXP	KtXP
9.	Q–B3!	

An obvious attacking move which wins quickly. The immediate threat, one which cannot be defended against, is the capture of Black's KBP.

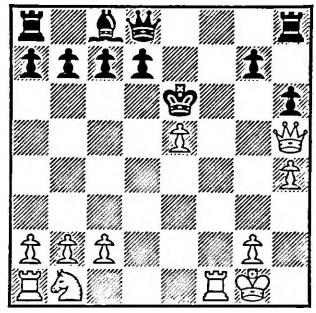
9.		Kt(5)–Kt4
10.	BXKt(Kt5)	KtXB
11.	BXPch	K–K2

11 . . . . K–B1 would make little difference in the attack to follow.

12.	Q–R5	P–KR3
13.	P–KR4	Kt–K3?

Permitting a quick finish. 13 . . . . Kt–R2 was better.

14.	BXKt	KXB



White announced mate in four.

15.	Q–B7ch	KXP
16.	R–B5ch	K–K5
17.	Q–Q5ch	K–K6
18.	Q–Q3 mate	

8-BOARD EXHIBITION—BARCELONA, NOVEMBER 16, 1935

ENGLISH OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Olaf Villaro
1. P–QB4	Kt–QB3

This is hardly the best answer, as White can now get a strong game with 2 P–Q4. However, I played the opening as I had prepared it.

2.	Kt–QB3	P–K4
3.	Kt–B3	Kt–B3
4.	P–Q4	PXP
5.	KtXP	KtXKt?

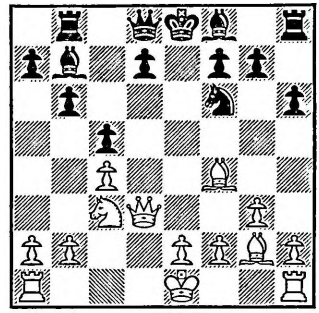
Any move, such as this one, which gives your opponent undisputed control of the center, can only be condemned. 5 . . . . B–Kt5 is best.

6.	**QXKt**	**P–QB4**
7.	**Q–Q3**	**P–KR3**
8.	**P–KKt3**	**P–QKt3?**

This attempt to oppose Bishops is suicidal. The Black Rook now becomes an ideal target for a obvious attack.

9.	**B–Kt2**	**R–QKt1**
10.	**B–B4**	**B–Kt2**

This looks like enough to save Black, but White has an interesting resource.



11.	**Kt–Kt5**	**B–K2**

Kt–B7ch and Q–Q6 mate were threatened.

12.	**BXB**	**RXB**
13.	**Kt–Q6ch**	**BXKt**
14.	**BXB**	**Kt–Kt1**
15.	**Q–K4ch**	Resigns.

As I look back over the preceding games, and most of the stories which accompany them, the thought occurs that I may be giving my readers a terribly one-sided picture of blindfold chess. Blindfold players, it would seem, never lose and never make bad moves! This is hardly the case. I, for one, lose many games, although my average remains high. And, as is the case with every chess player who has ever lived, I sometimes make extremely poor moves. In fact, I have just as many stories of "almost" games as any duffer at your chess club! Here is a game in which my opponent left a piece dangling before my closed eyes for three successive moves, a game which, although finally won, is not one to be proud of.

8-BOARD EXHIBITION—TARRECA, 1935

BIRD'S OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Senor "X"
1. **P–KB4**	**P–Q4**
2. **Kt–KB3**	**P–K3**
3. **P–K3**	**Kt–KB3**
4. **P–QKt3**	**P–B4**
5. **B–Kt2**	**B–Q3**
6. **B–Kt5ch**	**B–Q2**
7. **BXBch**	**QKtXB**
8. **O–O**	**O–O**
9. **Kt–K5**	**Kt–K1**
10. **P–Q4**	**Kt(1)–B3**

11.	Kt–Q2	Kt–K5
12.	KtXKt(K4)	PXKt
13.	P–B4?	

The blind spot: White could win a piece in this position with 13 KtXKt, QXKt; 14 PXP. So simple, and yet. . . .

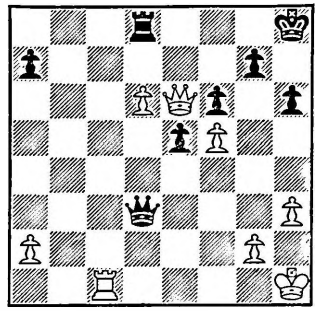
13.		P–B3
14.	KtXKt	QXKt
15.	Q–B2??	

Aha! I'll bet you thought I had seen the waiting gift! No such luck for either of us. However, the game livens up in a few moves.

15.		PXP
16.	PXP	Q–B3
17.	P–KB5	P–K4
18.	P–Q5	Q–B4ch
19.	K–R1	P–K6
20.	Q–K4	Q–Kt3
21.	QR–K1	B–B4
22.	B–B1	

At last I win a Pawn. I played this entire game certain that my opponent was a player of the first calibre. Yes, I know! So did he!

22.		Q–R4
23.	R–K2	P–QKt4
24.	BXP	PXP
25.	PXP	BXB
26.	QXB	QR–B1
27.	R–QB2	Q–R5
28.	Q–QKt3	Q–R4
29.	R–QKt1	Q–B4
30.	Q–Kt5	Q–Q5
31.	Q–Q7	RXP
32.	RXR	QXR
33.	Q–K6ch	K–R1
34.	P–Q6	Q–Q6
35.	R–QB1	R–Q1
36.	P–KR3	P–KR3



White now finishes strongly.

37.	R–B8!	Q–B8ch
38.	K–R2	Q–B5ch
39.	K–Kt1	Q–K6ch
40.	K–R1!	K–R2
41.	P–Q7	Q–Q7
42.	Q–K8!	Resigns

Any chessmaster will tell you that one should never make moves which are not theoretically justified. This is especially true in the opening—yet it is in this part of the game that the most glaring errors are committed, and the prettiest wins achieved. In my experience on the White side of blindfold games, I have found that it is the very strong players who are most likely to try a departure from sound and tested variations. Perhaps they rely upon their own ability to extricate them from whatever dangers may result; perhaps it is their impression that the blindfold player will go to pieces when confronted with a new and therefore

surprising position. Whatever their reasoning, I, for one, am always happy to play against an expert who has decided to surprise me in this manner, and who usually discovers that the blindfold player knows as much as he does about good and bad moves!

10-BOARD EXHIBITION—PALAFRUGE, APRIL, 1936

FRENCH DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	M. Saura
1. P–K4	P–K3
2. P–Q4	P–Q4
3. Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4. P–K5	P–QB4
5. Q–Kt4	PXP?

Here it is. Both K–B1 and Kt–K2 are correct, and my opponent, champion of the Gerona district, knows this. Nevertheless, he makes a move he would never try against a beginner in his own club.

6. QXKtP	PXKt
7. P–QKt3	

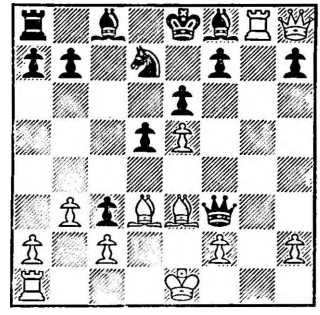
White is in no hurry to capture the Rook, and first renders the discovered check by the Bishop impossible. The game has just begun, but it is already too late for Black to re-establish himself.

7.	Q–R5
8. QXR	Q–K5ch
9. B–K3	Q–Kt3

This is forced, since, after 9 . . . . QXBP, White will play 10 QXKtch, K–K2; 11 B–Kt5ch, K–Q2; 12 B–Kt5ch, Kt–B3, Q–Q8 mate.

10. Kt–KB3	B–B1
11. B–Q3	QXKtP
12. R–KKt1	QXKt
13. RXKt	Kt–Q2

If 13 . . . . Q–R8ch, 14 K–K2, QXR; 15 RXBch, K–Q2; 16 RXB and mate follows.



14. B–QKt5

This is the quickest way to end the game, and it proves once again that the blindfold player does see—most of the time!

14.	K–K2
15. RXB	KtXR
16. B–Kt5ch	Resigns

If 16 . . . . P–B3; 17 BXPch, QXB; 18 QXQ mate. Or 17 . . . . K–B2; 18 Q–Kt7 mate.

CHAPTER FIVE

Touring England and Scotland

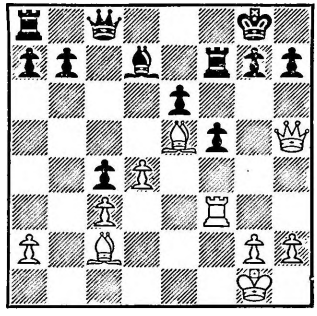
MY SEVERAL TOURS OF BRITAIN HAVE ALWAYS LEFT ME WITH A favorable impression of these neighboring peoples who share few feelings so much as their high respect for chess masters. Of the two, England sees more chess activity, and one encounters chess contests as frequently as bowling matches in the United States. Everybody plays, and though the English produce few masters, they do manage to enter players in international events whose ability is always respected. Best of all, English players are the sort of people one really enjoys knowing.

C. J. Kipping, one of the world's greatest problemists, is such a man. I first met him during my 1936-37 tour of the island, and was indeed surprised by his presence and his temperament. Mr. Kipping, curator of the famous Alain C. White chess problem collection, takes fiendish delight in exposing problemists whose compositions are less than truly original. When I accepted his invitation to stay with him for a few days, I expected a session with a fiery and wild-tempered old man. Of course, I was completely mistaken. He had a collection—one would have to call that many a collection!—of lovely cats, and an old, blind fox terrier. I enjoyed many an hour with dog, cats, and host, and found the problem collection as complete as it is impressive.

Mr. Kipping was at that time headmaster of the Wednesbury High School, and arranged a 12-board blindfold exhibition for me. It was here that I was asked before starting play whether I minded if my opponent used small pieces! The headmaster must have warned the boys to behave well. During the exhibition and the lecture and question period which followed, every word and action on their part indicated the deference every chess player must dream of as the proper, inevitable recognition of his greatness!

This was also my first visit to Scotland, where a year later the Stockbridge Chess Club of Edinburgh was to arrange my 34-board exhibition. Edinburgh is a town to be proud of. Its wonderful location is enough to make it one of the world's most picturesque towns. As for Edinburgh itself, it is a city which seems to have garnered all of the 3d-pieces in the British Empire. One rarely finds them in England, yet everybody in Edinburgh seems to carry them.

The best Scottish jokes seem to be current in Scotland. They say that the train which runs through Edinburgh has two fares: third class at 1d, and first class at 1½d. There is always a stampede in the third-class sections, while the first-class remains empty! I discovered that it was the Scots who invented red, yellow and green traffic lights. The yellow, I was told, was added as a sign for Scotsmen to start their engines.



The above position occurred in a blindfold exhibition on 10 boards at the Birmingham Chess Club. I played: 1 R–R3, P–KR3 (if P–KKt3, then 2 QXKtPch, PXQ; 3 R–R8 mate); 2 Q–Kt6, K–B1; 3 B–Q6ch, K–K1; 4 RXRP, and Black resigned. 4 . . . PXR would have resulted in Q–Kt8ch and mate on the next move.

Newcastle is another town with a lively chess center. It was there that I met a retired banker whose name had best remain secret. He told me that he always insisted on the White pieces, for his success was the result of a careful heeding of his father's practical advice: "Always avail yourself of every advantage, no matter how slight!"

The press was kind to me, and again I was able to read lengthy news accounts of the "chess wizard" who had just astounded the chess players of this or that town. One of these, appearing in a newspaper in the town of Ryde, went so far as to compare me to the queen of the seas:

"... One has often heard and read of 'blindfold' exhibitions, and simultaneous matches played by one man against a large number of opponents. But it is an odd phase of human nature that, however well one may informed, he does not realize the stupendous nature of a great performance until he has actually seen it. Hundreds of thousands who knew all that was to be publicly known about the great ship, *Queen Mary*, traveled long distances to Southampton, only to see her in dock. Those who witnessed the performance of M. Koltanowski in the scientific game of chess last Saturday, enjoyed an experience they will not forget."

The match in question was a 12-board demonstration against the Isle of Wight Chess Club.

I can honestly say that my tours of the British Isles have been among the most enjoyable of my chess experiences. High among the many reasons for this must be placed the conservative style of play which characterizes British amateur chess. Opponents who play conservatively are a source of great joy to the blindfold player, for such opposition is the natural breeding ground for brilliancies. I've always enjoyed a chance to be brilliant in an exhibition, for, besides making an evening more memorable for all concerned, a brilliancy serves to engrave the event in my mind for all time.

One such game was that in an 8-board exhibition in London's Imperial Chess Club. My opponent's name was in curious harmony with that of his club!

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	A. Duke
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–B3
5. P–Q4	BXP
6. KtXB	KtXKt
7. P–B4	P–Q3

This is Black's best move. White now plays a line whose value has been neglected by the theorists.

8. P–B3	Kt–B3
9. P–B5	Q–K2

Not so good, for Black must prevent the dangerous pin of his Kt which follows.

10.	B–KKt5	P–KR3
11.	B–R4	B–Q2
12.	P–QKt4	P–QR3
13.	P–QR4	

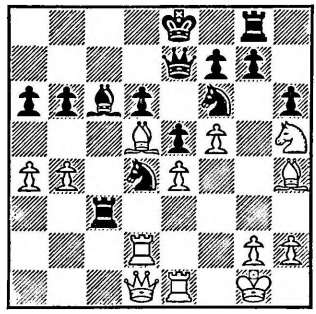
White makes Black's plan to castle on the Q side unpalatable.

13.		Kt–QR2
14.	B–QKt3	R–Q1
15.	Q–B3	B–B3?

Black must do something about the continuing pressure on his center and K side. Best was 15 . . . . P–B4.

16.	Kt–Q2	P–QKt3
17.	R–B2	B–Kt2
18.	R–K1	P–B4
19.	Kt–B1	PXP
20.	PXP	Kt–B3
21.	Kt–Kt3	Kt–Q5
22.	Q–Q1	R–QB1
23.	Kt–R5	R–KKt1
24.	R–Q2	R–B6
25.	B–Q5	B–B3

Here it comes! The pin of the Kt pays dividends at last!



26.	RXKt!	PXR
27.	QXP	Q–K4!
28.	KtXKtPch!!	

The key to the combination.

28.		RXKt
29.	BXKt	

And White is going to win a piece.

29.		RXPch
30.	KXR	R–B7ch
31.	K–B3!	QXRP
32.	BXBch	RXB
33.	Q–Kt1	Resigns

Breaking the English Record

The high spot of my 1936-37 tour through England was the display at Bath. There, in the historic Pump Room which dates from Roman times, I succeeded in surpassing the British blindfold record (20 boards) which I had set at Hampstead in 1932. At Bath I met 21 opponents and achieved one of my best scores, 14 wins and 7 draws. One of the games in this exhibition pro-

vided an interesting demonstration of the danger of departing from a well-analyzed line early in the opening.

PETROFF DEFENSE

	White	*Black*
	Koltanowski	Dr. McKeag
1.	P–K4	P–K4
2.	Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
3.	KtXP	P–Q3
4.	Kt–KB3	KtXP
5.	P–Q4	P–Q4
6.	B–Q3	P–KB4?

The departure—decidedly inferior to B–KKt5.

7.	O–O	B–Q3
8.	P–B4	P–B3
9.	Kt–B3	B–B2
10.	Q–K2	B–K3
11.	PXP	PXP
12.	Kt–KKt5	Q–Q3

Black threatens mate. If 12 .... KtXKt; 14 BXKt, QXB; 14 QXBch would have won at least a P.

13.	P–KKt3	KtXKt(Kt5)
14.	BXKt	O–O??

This loses immediately. Best was 14....K–B2, with an inferior game.

15.	Kt–Kt5	Resigns

Sometimes the quest for brilliancy leads one into decidedly dubious continuations. One such occasion highlighted an exhibition in 1937 against the London Gas Company Chess Club:

CARO-KANN DEFENSE

	White	*Black*
	Koltanowski	J. H. Veining
1.	P–K4	P–QB3
2.	P–Q4	P–Q4
3.	PXP	PXP
4.	P–QB4	

The sharpest continuation.

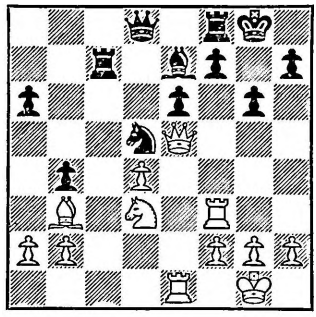
4.		Kt–KB3
5.	Kt–QB3	PXP

Black achieves a position also arising out of an inferior line in the Queen's Gambit Accepted.

6.	BXP	P–K3
7.	Kt–B3	B–K2
8.	O–O	O–O
9.	Q–K2	P–QR3
10.	R–Q1	P–QKt4
11.	B–Kt3	B–Kt2
12.	B–Kt5	P–Kt5
13.	BXKt	BXB
14.	Kt–K4	BXKt?

Black gives up one of his B's. Better was 14 .... B–K2.

15.	QXB	Kt–Q2
16.	Kt–K5	Kt–Kt3
17.	QR–B1	Kt–Q4
18.	R–Q3	R–B1
19.	QR–Q1	P–Kt3
20.	R–KB3	R–B2
21.	Kt–Q3	B–K2
22.	R–K1	Kt–B3
23.	Q–K5	Kt–Q4



24. RXBP!?

A surprise for Black—and for White as well. I just felt that I had to do something here, and I did!

24.		KXR
25.	QXPch	K—Kt2
26.	BXKt	P—QR4
27.	Q—K4	
28.	Kt—B4!	R—KB3

The threat of Kt—K6 is decisive.

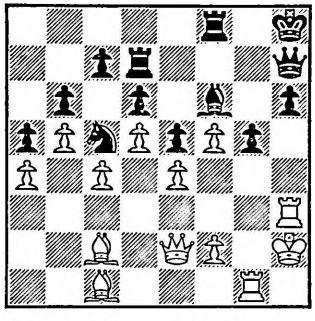
28.		RXKt
29.	QXR	R—Q2
30.	Q—B7ch	K—R1
31.	RXB!	Resigns

After 31....QXR; 32 Q—Kt8 mate. If 31....RXR; 32 Q—B6ch, R—Kt2; 33 QXQch and mate next move.

Although I won this game, I'm still not certain that the Rook sacrifice was correct. You know, "End good, all good!"

Can You Win This?

This question was posed during my interval in a 10-board exhibition in Norwich during 1937. "I always try to!," I replied. Look at the position carefully. Was I right in not accepting the draw?



36.	BXP	BXB
37.	RXB	PXR
38.	RXQch	KXR
39.	K—Kt3	R—B3
40.	Q—Kt4	R—Kt2
41.	K—B3	Kt—Q2
42.	Q—R5ch	K—Kt1
43.	Q—K8ch	K—R2
44.	Q—Q8	K—R3
45.	QXP	R(2)—B2
46.	Q—Q8	K—Kt2
47.	K—Kt2	K—R2
48.	B—Q1	K—R3
49.	B—Kt4	R—Kt2
50.	P—B3	R(2)—B2
51.	Q—K8	Kt—B1
52.	K—B2	Kt—Q2
53.	K—K3	Kt—B1
54.	Q—Q8	Kt—Q2
55.	Q—B7	R—Kt2

56.	K–Q2	R(2)–B2
57.	K–B3	R–Kt2
58.	Q–Q8	R(2)–B2
59.	Q–K8	Kt–B1

If K–Kt2, then 60 B–R5.

60. **P–B5!**

At last White is ready for the breakthrough.

60.		QPXP
61.	P–Q6	Kt–Q2
62.	B–R3	K–R2
63.	B–B1	Kt–B1
64.	Q–B6	Kt–Q2
65.	B–B4	R–Kt2
66.	B–K6	Kt–B1
67.	P–Q7	KtXP
68.	BXKt	RXQ
69.	PXR	R–Kt1
70.	P–B7	Resigns

The game was probably never a win, but it was worth the try and does demonstrate the sureness of the blindfold player.

Openings like the Caro-Kann defense are among the most valuable weapons of the average player. Their simplicity, and their small number of important variations, make it possible for any player to play with certainty in a familiar type of position. Unfortunately, many amateurs are so anxious to simplify that they develop lost endings in the process. Here is an example from an 8-board exhibition in Colchester, August 22, 1937.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Mr. "X"
1. P–K4	P–QB3
2. P–Q4	P–Q4
3. PXP	PXP
4. P–QB4	Kt–QB3
5. Kt–KB3	Kt–B3
6. Kt–B3	P–K3

6 . . . . B–Kt5 seems much better here. The pin of his KKt would then pose some problems for White, since Black would threaten PXP or BXKt.

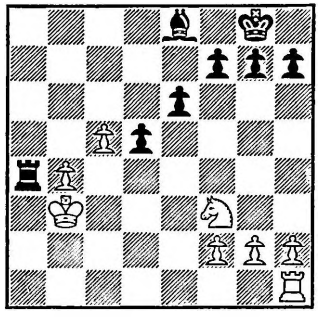
7.	B–Kt5	B–K2
8.	P–B5	O–O
9.	B–Q3	P–QKt3
10.	B–Kt5	B–Kt2
11.	BXQKt	BXB
12.	P–QKt4	Kt–K5!
13.	BXB	KtXKt

Black is anxious to remove as much material as possible. Stronger would have been 13 . . . . QXB.

14.	BXQ	KtXQ
15.	BXKtP	PXB?

15 . . . . KtXKBP was necessary. Now Black quickly drifts into a lost endgame.

16.	KXKt	R–R5
17.	P–QR3	KR–R1
18.	K–B2	RXRP
19.	RXR	RXR
20.	K–Kt2	R–R5
21.	K–Kt3	PXP
22.	QPXP	B–K1



23.	R–QB1	R–R3
24.	Kt–Q4	

The Kt is stronger than the B in this ending.

24.		R–R1
25.	P–B6	K–B1
26.	P–Kt5	P–K4
27.	Kt–B5	R–Kt1
28.	Kt–Q6	K–K2
29.	P–B7	Resigns

Black cannot stop the queening of the Pawn, which spells loss of the Rook, and thus of the game.

My penchant for playing the Max Lange in exhibitions soon became known in the British clubs, and I was then confronted with a variety of unusual opening lines. Some of them, like one played in an 8-board exhibition at Chichester on August 24, 1937, came to rapid conclusions.

CENTER COUNTER

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Mr. "X"
1. P–K4	P–Q4
2. PXP	QXP
3. Kt–QB3	Q–QR4
4. P–QKt4	Q–K4ch

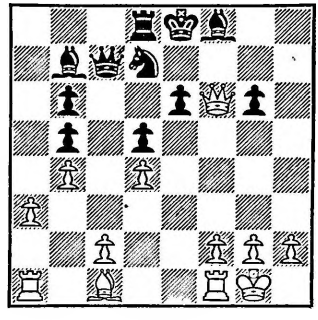
Black chooses a weak line that loses a lot of time. Better was 4 . . . . QXKtP.

5.	B–K2	P–QB3
6.	Kt–B3	Q–B2
7.	O–O	P–K3
8.	P–QR3	QKt–Q2
9.	P–Q4	P–QKt3
10.	B–Q3	B–Kt2
11.	Q–K2	KKt–B3
12.	Kt–K5	Kt–Q4
13.	KtXKt	BPXKt
14.	B–QKt5	R–Q1

Black decides to give up the exchange. Better is 14 . . . . B–B1, although White's continuation would be the same.

15.	Q–B3	P–B3
16.	Q–R5ch	P–Kt3
17.	KtXP	PXKt
18.	QXR	P–QR3
19.	QXBP!	PXB

White now announced mate in three.



20.	QXKPch	B–K2
21.	QXKtPch	K–B1
22.	B–R6 mate	

R. I. P.

Keswick, a little town in England's Cumberland Mountains, was always one of my favorite stops. The beauty of this place, surrounded as it was by mountains and lakes, boasting an inn as old as the history of the region, made it the ideal resting place for a travel-weary chess master. Keswick had a small but select chess club, which saw to it that I gave a blindfold exhibition each year. These visits were really made possible by my dear friend, the late Sir Hugh Walpole, novelist extraordinary and a devoted lover of chess.

Sir Hugh was a keen chess player; had he been able to devote more time to the game, he would have risen high in the ranks of his country's players. In his first game against me, one of eight, he tried to play blindfolded too, his secretary making his moves for him. Not being accustomed to the effort, he lost very quickly. Seeking revenge, he trained for my next visit and gave me real trouble in a game which I was just able to draw.

The novelist thought very highly of my blindfold abilities, and presented me with a personally inscribed collection of his works which I cherish. Here is one of the games we played together in an 8-board exhibition in 1937. In bringing it to you, I wish to honor a great artist, chess player, and friend who has entered the Great Beyond.

COLLE OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Sir Hugh Walpole
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–KB3	P–K3
3. P–K3	P–Q4
4. B–Q3	QKt–Q2
5. QKt–Q2	B–Q3

Black should play P–B4 at an early stage. As it is, White proceeds at his ease.

6. P–K4	PXP
7. KtXP	KtXKt
8. BXKt	Kt–B3
9. B–Q3	O–O
10. O–O	P–KR3

Black wants to avoid the pinning of his KKt. Better would be 10 . . . . P–QKt3 and B–Kt2.

11. Q–K2	B–Q2?
12. Kt–K5	P–B4
13. PXP	BXP
14. R–Q1	Q–K2

Otherwise White wins a piece with 15 KtXB and 16 B–QKt5.

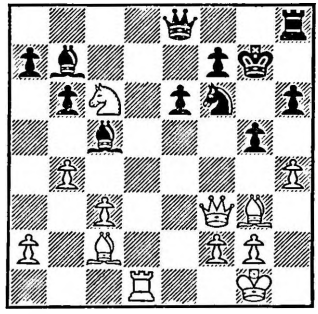
15.	**B–KB4**	**QR–Q1**
16.	**Q–KB3**	**B–B1**
17.	**P–B3**	**P–KKt4**

Black loses patience. He observes that White is ready to advance his Q-side Pawn majority, and decides to begin a K-side attack, which leads to fatal results.

18.	**B–Kt3**	**K–Kt2**
19.	**P–KR4**	**R–KR1**
20.	**B–B2**	**P–Kt3**
21.	**Kt–B6**	**B–Kt2**
22.	**P–QKt4!**	

The move Black had overlooked.

22.		**RXRch**
23.	**RXR**	**Q–K1**



If 23.... BXKt, then 24 QXB would have won a piece for White. Black's only saving move, which would have cost him a Pawn, was 23.... P–Kt5; 24 KtXQ, BXQ; 25 PXB, BXKt; 26 B–K5, R–Q1; 27 PXP, etc. He would surely have played this if he had noticed.

24.	**QXKtch!!**	**KXQ**
25.	**B–K5** mate	

CHAPTER SIX

Switzerland

EUROPE'S OLDEST REPUBLIC WELL DESERVES ITS REPUTATION AS THE beauty spot of the Old World. Who can forget the lakes, the towering mountains, the ever-changing countryside, the fine food and drinks, and, most important of all, the friendliness of its people! *Gemütlichkeit* is the word which best describes the wholesomeness of the Swiss, a people I came to know especially well during the tours Henry Grob arranged for me in 1936 and 1937.

The 1937 tour created some sort of a world record. I played 26 exhibitions in 26 days in 26 different cities, each night's event being a 10-board blindfold demonstration. I made a score of 94 per cent in the 260 games, a result which is comparable to the best obtained in any chess master's tour of any country!

I've toured continually over the years, and this was the most difficult of all. Consider that I had to switch beds and food every day, that I had to travel, that I endured and enjoyed a large number of official receptions, and that I always had to be in top form. This kind of feat means much more than making a large score in a single exhibition and then not playing again for many months.

Switzerland, it will be remembered, is a country whose inhabitants speak French, German, and Italian. In addition, a great many Swiss speak English fairly well. I had to be on my toes in four languages! One of the early exhibitions, in Schaffhausen, where I won 9 out of the 10 games, the local *Zeitung* had this to say:

"Die Schaffhauser traten nicht in der starksten Bezetzung an. Manch einer der Startsken wird sich mitleidvoll gesagt haben, Koltanowski sei ein gutes Resultat zu gönnen, er wolle ihm nicht einen

Punkt wegnehmen. Und nun dieses Resultat! Sie alle kannten eben Koltanowski noch nicht."

The Swiss players provided many a surprise for me. The chief reason for this was their continued refusal to commit serious blunders during the exhibitions. My tours were well advertised, and every club took special pains to gather its strongest players for my visit. As a result, the play in most cases required careful positional judgment on my part to prepare the final breakthroughs. Here's a good example of these tactics from the exhibition in Riehen, in October, 1937.

HUNGARIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Herr "X"
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–K2
4. O–O	Kt–KB3
5. Kt–B3	P–Q3
6. P–KR3	P–KR3
7. P–Q3	O–O

Black obtains his best chances in this opening by castling Q, and by advancing the K-side Pawns. Best here was 7 . . . . P–KKt4.

8. B–K3	P–R3
9. Q–K2	B–Q2

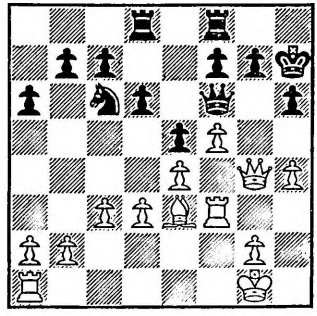
Another inaccuracy. Black's B will go to K3 soon, so why not at once?

10. Kt–R2	Kt–KR2
11. P–B4	B–K3
12. Kt–Q5	Kt–R4
13. KtXBch	QXKt
14. BXB	QXB
15. P–B5	Q–K2
16. Q–R5	Kt–KB3
17. Q–R4	Kt–B3
18. Kt–Kt4	KtXKt
19. QXKt	Q–B3

Black must prevent P–B6. If 19 . . . . P–B3, then 20 BXP. If 19 . . . . K–R2; 20 P–B6, PXP; 21 Q–R4 wins.

20. P–B3	QR–Q1
21. P–KR4	K–R1
22. R–B3	K–R2

White is now ready for the quick kill.



23. B–Kt5!

Simple, but neat!

23.	PXB
24. PXP	Q–K2
25. R–R3ch	K–Kt1
26. Q–R5	P–B3
27. P–Kt6	Resigns

Der Bund, one of Bern's prominent newspapers, has an unusual type of chess column. Dr. Max Adler acted as its editor in 1937, yet he was not its editor! The column was prepared with the cooperation of the Bern chess clubs; this was announced in each issue. As a result, and this might well be copied by newspapers the world over, the column was of continuing interest to every chess player in the city. Everyone, it seems, read the column carefully, knowing that every chess event of interest to him would be reported therein. Here is the game which was featured in the issue of November 10, 1937, after my exhibition at the Hotel Bristol in that Swiss city. In the final position, I had my choice of three moves by three different pieces as the last move of the announced mate in four!

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	E. Rey
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	Kt–B3
4. O–O	B–B4
5. P–Q4	BXP
6. KtXB	KtXKt
7. P–B4	P–Q3
8. P–B3	B–K3?

White's 8th move, comparatively ignored by most textbooks on the opening, comes as a surprise to Black, who now permits his opponent to gain valuable time.

9. B–Q3	Kt–B3
10. P–B5!	B–Q2
11. B–KKt5	Q–K2
12. P–QKt4!	

Black must be dissuaded from any plans he may envisage regarding a safe haven for his K on the Q side.

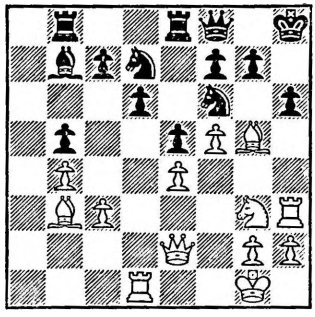
12.	P–QR3
13. P–QR4	Kt–QKt1
14. Q–K2	O–O
15. Kt–Q2	R–K1
16. B–QB4	B–B1?

Black decides upon a cramped and time-consuming defense which permits White to develop the attack at his leisure.

17. QR–Q1	QKt–Q2
18. B–Kt3	P–Kt4
19. PXP	PXP
20. R–B3	R–Kt1
21. Kt–B1	Q–B1
22. R–Kt3	

Threatening B–R6.

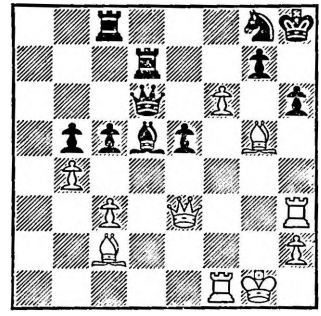
22.	K–R1
23. R–R3	B–Kt2
24. Kt–Kt3	P–KR3



25.	Q–K3	Kt–Kt1
26.	R–KB1	Kt(2)–B3
27.	B–B2	P–Q4
28.	Kt–R5	KtXKt
29.	RXKt	P–B3
30.	B–KR4	QR–Q1
31.	PXP	BXP
32.	B–K1	R–Q2
33.	P–Kt4!	Q–K2
34.	R–R3	R–QB1
35.	B–KR4	P–B4
36.	P–Kt5	BPXKKtP?

Black has deluded himself into thinking that he has counterplay on the Q side, and permits White to enter on the K side.

37.	BXP	Q–Q3
38.	P–B6!	



38.		KtPXP??
39.	BXPch	KtXB

White announces mate in four.

40.	QXPch	K–Kt1
41.	Q–R8ch	K–B2
42.	R–R7ch	K–K3
43.	B–B5 mate	

I arrived in Basel full of high spirits. The tour had been going exceedingly well, and I was at a peak of confidence when I faced 10 boards—rather, turned my back to them—on the night of October 9, 1937. I had resolved to play a gambit wherever possible, and the result was a group of very sharp games, the best of which was a curious Wing Gambit in the Sicilian.

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	C. Milesi
1. P–K4	P–QB4
2. P–QKt4	

No, I would hardly play this move in a serious game.

2. P–K3

Black plays the opening in complete disdain of the traditional opening aims—control of the center, and development of the pieces. 2 . . . . PXP was best.

3.	PXP	BXP
4.	P–Q4	Q–R4ch
5.	B–Q2	B–Kt5
6.	P–QB3	B–K2

The player of the Black pieces seems to be very much the novice. Was he leading me on? Perhaps some strong kibitzer appeared upon the scene at this point, for Black's play suddenly improves.

7.	B–Q3	P–Q3
8.	KKt–K2	QKt–Q2
9.	O–O	KKt–B3
10.	P–KR3	P–QR3
11.	B–K3	P–QKt4
12.	QKt–Q2	Q–B2
13.	QR–B1	

White continues developing his pieces before undertaking anything.

13.		B–Kt2
14.	P–KB4	

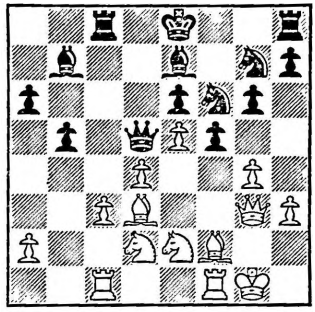
Now is the time to start something!

14.		R–QB1
15.	Q–K1	Q–Q1
16.	Q–Kt3	Kt–R4
17.	Q–B3	P–Kt3
18.	P–Kt4	

White cannot wait, and proceeds to attack. Surely the backward Black position and the uncastled King should permit something! Black, on the other hand, refuses to be bothered, and still manages to defend himself very nicely.

18.		Kt–Kt2
19.	Q–Kt3	P–B4
20.	B–KB2	Kt–B3
21.	P–K5	QPXP
22.	BPXP	Q–Q4!

What's this? Black threatens mate in one!



23.	K–R2	P–KKt4!

If now 24 PXKt, B–Q3 wins the Queen.

24.	B–K3	P–B5

Much stronger would have been 24....P–KR4; 25 PXKt, RPXP; 26 PXKt, RXRPch; 27 QXR, PXQ; 28 P–Kt8(Q)ch, K–Q2; 29 QXRch, KXR; 30 Kt–B3(best), P–KKt5, with very good chances. Now White saves himself.

25.	BXBP	Kt–B4

If 25....PXB; 26 KtXP plus PXKt wins. The text-move tries to complicate matters for the blindfold player, who is fortunately in fine form at the moment.

26. BXKt

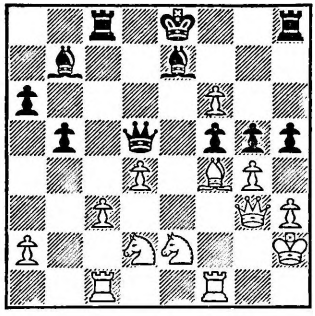
Simple, but good.

26.		KPXB
27.	PXKt	

Quickly, now!

27.		P–KR4

Too late. If BXP, then 28 B–K5, and if 27 . . . . PXB; 28 KtXP, Q–B3; 29 PXB wins.



28.	PXBP	

This move kills all counterplay by Black. The rest is just a matter of careful play, as before, but the sting has been removed from the Black attack.

28.		PXB
29.	KtXP	QXRP
30.	Q–K3!	

Defending, and also threatening mate in one.

30.		R–B2
31.	QR–K1	Q–R6
32.	PXB	RXBP
33.	Q–K5!	

The end approaches: if 33 . . . . R–Kt1; 34 P–B6 and P–B7ch finishes matters.

33.		RXRPch

Just a hope that White will not see . . .

34.	KtXR	

But he does. Black resigns.

The 10-board exhibition in St. Gallen, on October 14, 1937, was made interesting by one of those chess rarities—the opportunity at the end of the game to place my Queen upon an unguarded square in the center of the board, in such a position that it could not be captured, and thus force the win. Am I unclear? Well, look at the game:

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Monsieur "X"
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. P–QB4	P–K3
3. Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
4. B–Kt5	QKt–Q2
5. P–K3	P–B3
6. P–QR3	B–K2
7. Q–B2	O–O
8. R–Q1	R–K1
9. Kt–B3	P–B4?

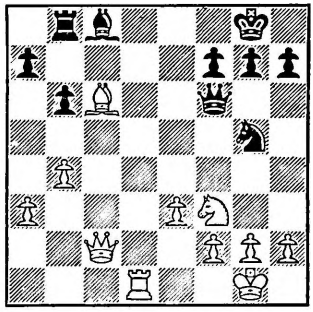
This move loses a P, but, even more serious, opens the Q file for the White R. Better was 9 . . . . P–KR3.

10.	P×BP	Kt×P
11.	P×P	Kt×P
12.	B×B	Q×B
13.	Kt×Kt	P×Kt
14.	R×P	P–QKt3
15.	B–Kt5	R–Q1
16.	R×Rch	Q×R
17.	P–QKt4	Kt–K3
18.	B–B6	R–Kt1
19.	O–O	

High time!

19.		Q–B3
20.	R–Q1	Kt–Kt4

Black now receives a couple of shocks!

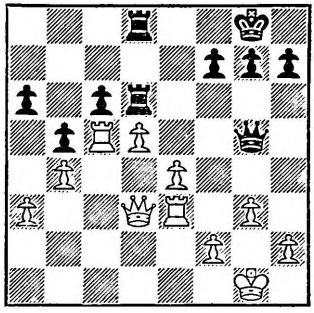


21.	Q–B3!	Kt×Ktch
22.	P×Kt	Q–K2

Black cannot take the Pawn unless he is willing to be mated on the move. Best was 22 . . . . B–K3.

23. **Q–K5!!** Resigns

The Jewish Chess Club of Zurich, which I visited on November 7, 1937, for a 10-board exhibition, is an active group against which I was able to win 8 and draw 2. The final position on Board No. 4 illustrates the potential strength of an advanced pair of passed doubled Pawns!



As White, I found it possible to sacrifice a Rook to win.

28.	P×P!	Q×R(B5)
29.	P×Q	R×Q
30.	R×R	R×R
31.	P–B7!	Resigns

Any player who accepts the Queen's Gambit must bear one important idea in mind. He must play P–QB4 as soon as possible! Otherwise White's advantage in development will allow him to build up and succeed in a quick attack on the K side. A simple

example of what can then happen is contained in the following little game, played in a 10-board exhibition in St. Gallen in 1936.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT

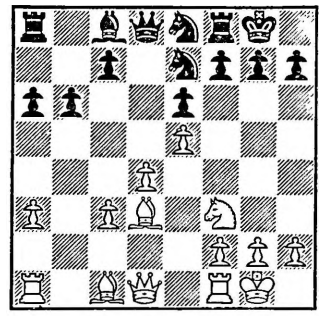
White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Monsieur "X"
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. P–QB4	P–K3
3. Kt–QB3	PXP
4. P–K3	

A quiet way of handling the opening. P–K4 is more aggressive.

4.	Kt–KB3
5. BXP	Kt–B3?

Better was 5....P–QR3, to be followed by P–QB4.

6. Kt–B3	P–QR3
7. O–O	B–Kt5
8. P–QR3	BXKt
9. PXB	O–O
10. B–Q3	Kt–K2
11. P–K4	P–QKt3
12. P–K5	Kt–K1



13. BXRPch!

Surprise!

13.	K–R1

After 13....KXB; 14 Kt–Kt5ch, K–Kt3; 15 Q–Kt4, P–KB4; 16 Q–R4 wins. If Black plays 14....K–Kt1, then 15 Q–R5.

14. B–K4	Kt–Q4
15. Kt–Kt5	P–Kt3
16. Q–Kt4	Kt–Kt2
17. Q–R4ch	Kt–R4
18. KtXBPch!	Resigns

Black loses his Queen.

WUNDERBAR!!

It was at one of the Hastings tournaments that I made my position on Hitler clear to a group of visiting German players. The result was scarcely unexpected. I soon found that I was no longer welcome in the land of the Nazis. In fact, I might say that I was "wanted," but not for chess purposes. Of course, my German tours were a thing of the past. However, a large part of my Swiss tour of 1937 was through districts bordering Germany, in

which I was never really at ease. Many of these exhibitions were curious affairs, but the most amazing of all occurred at the little village of Kreuzlingen.

The request for my exhibition in Kreuzlingen came to me in an unsigned letter which enclosed my fee in advance. I was to appear at the village restaurant on the evening of a day late in October. Thinking it strange that my sponsor should have omitted his signature, I nevertheless placed Kreuzlingen on my agenda.

My wife and I arrived at the village railway station early in the evening of the appointed day. For the first time since the opening of the tour we found no one to welcome us. Was this truly part of hospitable Switzerland? The stationmaster directed us to the nearest hotel, quite near the station, where we took rooms for the night. From these rooms, the hotelkeeper informed us, we could see over the German border, less than a mile away.

The village proper was less than a half-mile away, in the direction of the bridge which led right into the German city of Friedrichshafen. We walked, and were soon at the restaurant in which I was to play. A table had been reserved for us, and we sat there waiting for the sponsor of the exhibition to make his appearance. No one spoke to us, and no one seemed to notice our presence. There wasn't even a sign at the restaurant announcing the exhibition!

People began drifting into the restaurant at about 7:30, and by 8 o'clock there must have been a hundred present. It was then that a tall man came up to me, announced that he was a visitor from a town some fifty miles away, and informed me that he would act as teller. His manner seemed to beg me not to ask any questions, and I didn't. In a few minutes the tables had been arranged, the boards set up, and the display was under way.

By 9 o'clock more than two hundred people had crowded into the restaurant, making this the strangest exhibition ever conducted by any master anywhere. Not a sound could be heard from anyone. Every time I puffed at a cigarette, I could hear the loudness of my exhalation fill the room. It was as if only the teller and I were actors before some audience of deaf-mutes. I tried all the audience-participation tricks I knew, but to no avail. I offered to repeat the moves of all or any of the games,

and did so. No applause. I announced a pretty mate in six. No reaction at all. My wife sat nearby throughout the exhibition, and I could see her growing more and more nervous. I soon shared her uneasiness, and resolved to finish as quickly as I could.

In spite of some stubborn resistance, I had won all the games by 11 o'clock. Not even this perfect score could bring forth a word from any of the spectators. What a relief it was for my wife and me when we walked out of that chilling atmosphere! We decided to walk to the far end of the darkened village and then back to our hotel. It was a German audience, we decided, a group of players from Friedrichshafen who were afraid to recognize one another in public at a Koltanowski exhibition. Why, not once during the evening had my name even been mentioned! The teller had referred to me only as "Master."

In a few minutes we turned back towards the restaurant and the hotel beyond it. It was then that the cyclists, perhaps a hundred or more of them, came riding past us on the way to the border and their homes beyond it. It was too dark to recognize them, but each one, without exception, had something to say as he passed us: "*Wunderbar!*" "Wonderful!" "Congratulations!" "Hope to see you again some day—in Germany!"

Yes, it was a quiet exhibition, but one of those in which I take the greatest pride. Alas, I can never express my appreciation to the unknown sponsor who dared to arrange a Koltanowski exhibition despite the Gestapo. But I will never forget a tiny spot on the Swiss map, that brave little village of Kreuzlingen!

QUEEN'S PAWN

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Herr "X von Kreuzlingen"
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	P–K3
4. P–K3	B–Q3
5. B–Kt3	BXB?
6. RPXB	

Black adds unusual play to the attractions of Kreuzlingen. There is no valid justification for this hasty exchange of Bishops. Better is 5 . . . . KKt–K2.

6.	Kt–B3
7. P–B4	PXP
8. BXP	O–O
9. P–QR3	P–KR3

Black seems to be carefully preparing his K side for an easier attack by White. As in the last game, Black fails to play for an

early advance of his QBP, and falls quickly by the wayside.

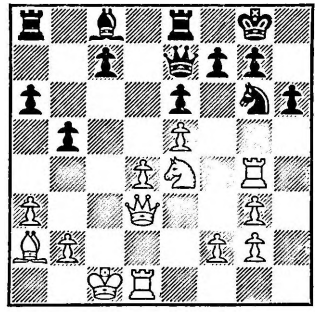
10.	Kt–B3	P–QR3
11.	P–K4	R–K1
12.	P–K5	Kt–Q4
13.	Kt–K4	QKt–K2
14.	Q–Q3	P–QKt4
15.	B–R2	Kt–KKt3
16.	Kt–R4	KtXKt?

Black continues to help his opponent. Better is 16....Kt(4)–K2.

17.	RXKt	Kt–K2
18.	R–Kt4	Kt–Kt3
19.	O–O–O	

At last White is ready for action!

19.		Q–K2



20.	Kt–B6ch!	PXKt

Now I am able to announce the finish in six more moves—an announcement which no one seems to hear!

21.	RXKtch	PXR
22.	QXPch	K–B1

If 22....K–R1, then 23 R–R1.

23.	PXP	Q–B2
24.	QXRPch	K–Kt1
25.	R–KR1	Resigns

The Queen's Gambit Declined presents Black with the age-old problem of developing his Queen's Bishop. A great deal has been written about the freeing of this piece, but very little attention has been placed upon the proper development of Black's King Bishop. The early development of this piece can allow White to slip a noose over his opponent's neck and slowly tighten his grip on the position until almost any move will suffice to win. A game played in a 12-board exhibition at Zurich on October 26, 1936, serves as an illustration:

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Monsieur "X"
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. P–QB4	P–K3
3. Kt–QB3	B–Kt5?
4. Q–R4ch	Kt–B3
5. P–K3	Kt–B3
6. Kt–B3	B–Q2
7. Q–B2	

Black was threatening 7.... KtXP.

7.		**Q–K2**

Aiming at P–K4.

8.	**P–QR3**	**BXKtch**
9.	**QXB**	**Kt–K5**
10.	**Q–B2**	**P–B4**
11.	**B–Q3**	**O–O**
12.	**O–O**	**P–QKt3**
13.	**P–QKt4**	**Kt–Q1**

As is always the case in all variations of the QP, Black now finds it essential to play for a break on the Q side before White's pressure in the center and on the K side become too strong. Note that the present, cramped Black Q side is the result of his third and fourth moves!

14. **Kt–K5**

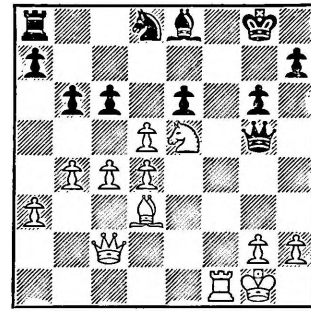
White gets to work on the K side before Black's unwieldy Q side begins to function.

14.		**P–B3**
15.	**P–B3**	**Kt–Kt4**
16.	**P–K4!**	**BPXP**
17.	**BXKt**	**QXB**
18.	**PXKP**	

This is better than 18 KtXB, when, after 18 . . . . PXB, White will have nothing.

18.		**RXRch**
19.	**RXR**	**B–K1**
20.	**KPXP**	**P–Kt3**

White was threatening 21 BXPch, K–R1; 22 R–B8 mate.



21. **P–Q6**

A murderous Pawn!

21.		**Q–R3**
22.	**Q–KB2**	**Q–Kt2**
23.	**P–B5!**	**B–B2**
24.	**B–B4**	**R–Kt1**
25.	**KtXB**	**KtXKt**
26.	**BXKP**	**R–Kt2**
27.	**P–Q7**	Resigns

Edgar Colle was one of the most gifted chess players of my generation, if not of all time. Unfortunately, he won few tournaments because of lifelong ill health. Despite this handicap, however, Colle produced a great number of brilliant masterpieces, many with the opening which he perfected and which has been named after him. After his early death, I vowed that I would do what I could to perpetuate his memory by popularizing his favorite opening. Since then (1936) I have played the Colle Opening at least once in every exhibition, every tournament,

every demonstration of over-the-board or blindfold ability. Here is the Colle from the exhibition in which the previous game was played:

COLLE OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Monsieur "X"
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
3. P–K3	P–K3
4. B–Q3	P–B4
5. P–B3	P–B5?

White's plan is to develop his pieces behind his P's, preparatory to advancing the KP. Black will be subjected to a serious K side attack unless he maintains the tension in the center. A move like 5 . . . . P–B5 serves to give White free play. Best is 5 . . . . QKt–Q2.

6. B–B2	Kt–B3
7. QKt–Q2	B–Q3
8. P–K4	PXP
9. KtXKP	P–QKt4
10. O–O	KtXKt
11. BXKt	B–Kt2
12. Q–K2	P–Kt3
13. P–QR4	P–QR3
14. P–QKt3	

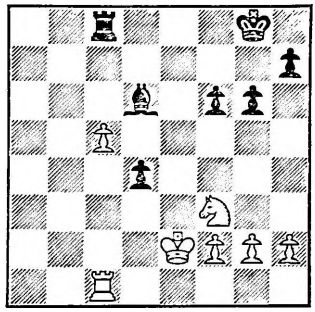
This move breaks Black's position up completely.

14.	BPXP
15. PXP	PXP
16. RXR	QXR
17. QXP	O–O
18. QXP	

And White is a Pawn ahead.

18.	Kt–R4
19. BXB	KtXQ
20. BXQ	KtXB
21. RXKt	RXB
22. P–B4	P–B3
23. K–B1	P–K4
24. P–B5	R–B1
25. K–K2	PXP?

Black falls for a simple, but instructive trap. Best is 25 . . . . K–B2.



26. PXB!	RXR
27. P–Q7	P–Q6ch
28. K–Q2	Resigns

One of the major arguments for the Colle Opening is the frequency with which White enters the ending with a majority of pawns on the Q side. It is a tiny advantage like this which can transform an otherwise even game into one of those careful endings which win best-played-game prizes. Here is one of my

favorite Colle-type endings, played in a 10-board exhibition at Solothurn in October, 1937:

COLLE OPENING

	White	*Black*
	Koltanowski	Monsieur "X"
1.	P–Q4	P–Q4
2.	Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
3.	P–K3	P–K3
4.	B–Q3	B–K2
5.	QKt–Q2	P–B4
6.	P–B3	QKt–Q2
7.	O–O	O–O
8.	Q–K2	P–QKt3
9.	P–K4	

White's opening strategy is simple and direct: the QP is maintained, the pieces are developed behind the pawn-chain, and then P–K4 is played.

9.		QPXP
10.	KtXP	B–Kt2
11.	KtXKtch	KtXKt
12.	PXP	PXP

Black wishes to avoid a clear-cut White Q side P majority, and hopes that this formation will hold the White Q side in check.

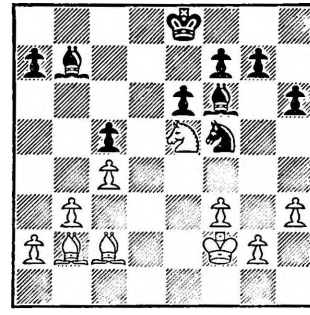
13.	R–Q1	Q–B2
14.	P–KR3	KR–Q1
15.	P–B4	Q–B3
16.	P–QKt3	R–Q2
17.	B–Kt2	QR–Q1

Both sides continue their development. Black now decides to simplify by exchanging as many pieces as he can.

18.	B–B2	RXRch
19.	RXR	RXRch
20.	QXR	P–KR3
21.	Q–Q3	K–B1
22.	K–B1	Q–K5

Black offers a draw with this exchange of Q's, but the blindfold player decides to continue.

23.	QXQ	KtXQ
24.	K–K2	B–KB3
25.	Kt–K5	K–K1
26.	P–B3	Kt–Kt6ch
27.	K–B2	Kt–B4



This move loses the game for Black who, despite his pair of B's, cannot hold back White's Q side P's.

28.	BXKt	PXB

If 28.... BXKt, then 29 BXB, PXB; 30 BXP, P–KR4; 31 K–K3 would win.

29. Kt–Q3!

Black must now exchange B's or lose a couple of P's.

29.		BXB
30.	KtXB	K–Q2

31.	P–KR4	K–Q3
32.	P–B4!	P–B3
33.	P–Kt3!	

The K side is now safe, and White can proceed with the forcing of a passed Pawn on the Q side.

33.		P–KKt4
34.	P–QR3	P–QR4
35.	K–K3	P–Kt5
36.	K–Q3	B–K5ch
37.	K–B3	B–Kt2
38.	P–Kt4	RPXPch
39.	PXP	PXPch
40.	KXP	

The passed Pawn has been established. Now White will use the threat of its advance to force an entry to the K side.

40.		K–B3
41.	K–B3	K–Q3
42.	K–Q4	B–K5
43.	Kt–Q3	B–B6

Black must avoid the exchange of B for Kt.

44.	Kt–Kt4	B–K5
45.	Kt–Q5	BXKt

But the exchange is now forced because of the danger of the penetration of the K side P position by the Kt.

46.	PXB	P–R4
47.	K–B4	K–Q2

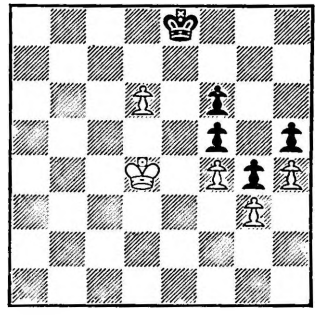
If Black can keep the White K out of K6, he will draw. Fortunately, I was able to "see" how to utilize the opposition to win.

48.	K–B5	K–B2
49.	P–Q6ch	K–Q1!
50.	K–Q4!	

If 50 K–B6, K–B1; 51 P–Q7ch, K–Q1; 52 K–Q6 stalemate! If 50 K–Q5, then K–Q2, while if 50 K–B4, K–B1 holds the opposition and the game for Black.

50.		K–K1

If 50 . . . . K–Q2, then 51 K–Q5 wins by 52 K–K6.



51.	K–QB4!!	Resigns

He cannot prevent the entry of the White King: If 51 . . . . K–Q1; 52 K–B5, K–B1; 53 K–B6, K–Q1; 54 P–Q7 wins. If 51 . . . . K–Q1; 52 K–B5, K–Q2; 53 K–Q5, K–Q1; 54 K–K6 wins.

CHAPTER SEVEN

The New World!!

AMERICANS FIND IT DIFFICULT TO UNDERSTAND THE WAYS IN WHICH Europeans think of the Western Hemisphere. The New World of the Sixteenth Century, with its mythical wealth and adventure, still lives in the European mind. Like everyone I knew, I had long looked forward to a visit to the West, but had always been forestalled by the great expense entailed in such a journey. Only Americans, it seemed, could afford tourist activities!

Bernard Freedman, an old friend and fellow-member of several Belgian chess clubs, had emigrated to Canada. Periodically, he would send a letter to one or another of his old chess friends. Ours was a haphazard correspondence, but one which continued over the years. I would send him a greeting card from this or that town, and he would invariably answer with news of the thriving chess community of Toronto and the spread of the game through the endless territory of Canada.

Our correspondence increased after I had won the world title in Edinburgh. Before I knew it, Bernard Freedman had arranged a tour of Canada and the United States and I was on a boat headed for Quebec.

Canada and the nations south of it have provided me with constant new experiences and an excitement which can perhaps be summed up in the words which struck me as my ship neared the shores of Canada on a misty September morning in 1938: "The horizon shines here! Even the horizon shines here!" How true! I have toured the New World eight times since then, traveling from five to ten thousand miles each season, visiting as many as seven countries in a ninety-day period, and everywhere I have found an interest in life and an optimism which an entire continent takes for granted and which has since become my own.

I am an American citizen now, yet my many friends all over the Western Hemisphere have made me feel that I am also a citizen of their country, a native of their town, a welcome guest in city, chess club or home. Yes, the horizon shines here, and I like to play with the romantic idea that it also shines for me because I wrote an occasional letter to the finest of friends, Bernard Freedman.

My first Canadian exhibition was played in Quebec on September 16, 1938. I was as nervous as a Thanksgiving turkey, and would have been happy to spend a week resting after the strain of proving myself to the first representatives of the Western world who had encountered me. But Freedman's agenda was pressing, and I started to get used to the strain of traveling great distances, distances which hardly exist in Europe, but are taken for granted in the Americas. Two days later, I was in Montreal, where I won 11 and drew 4 in my first Canadian blindfold exhibition. Montreal's Bell Telephone Chess Club sponsored it.

The headline of Montreal's *La Patria* on September 19 told of "EXPLOITS EXTRAORDINAIRES" by one George Koltanowski on the previous afternoon. The writer of the article, I am certain, still doesn't know how extraordinary a feat it was for me to play that day. I started the exhibition full of confidence and, after an hour or so, was playing strongly with a good game on every board. Then I froze in what was the most difficult position of my chess career. The sweat broke out on my brow, and I suddenly convinced myself that I would never again be able to play a game of blindfold chess. For the first time in my life, I had forgotten every position! Instead of the old ability to concentrate and recall the moves on every board, I found myself thinking of ocean voyages, the troubles in Spain, my breakfast that morning—of everything but the exhibition.

The agony was as complete as that which a doctor would suffer if he forgot how to hold a scalpel in the middle of a serious operation. I saw my entire tour going up in smoke, and with this despair my mind became even blanker than it had been. Some ten minutes passed, while I gritted my teeth and tried and *tried* to remember. It was no use; I was as good as finished.

My friends tell me that I'm a real showman, a man who responds to an audience in the grand tradition. They're right, and it was proven at that moment, for someone crept up to me and snapped a photograph of what he thought was a chess master concentrating on the best way to win a game. The sudden glare of the flashlight bulb brought me back to life, and light dawned upon the chessboards. What an experience!

A few days later I was in Toronto for a blindfold exhibition on sixteen boards. The Wing Gambit in the Sicilian was still rather new to Canadian players, and I won several games that evening with this strong attacking line.

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Kearns
1. P–K4	P–QB4
2. P–QKt4	PXP
3. P–QR3	

The line first popularized by Keres. Better seems the immediate 3 P–Q4.

3.	P–Q4
4. P–K5	Kt–QB3
5. P–Q4	P–K3

B–KB4 is a better move for Black at this point. As he plays it, the QB never gets into the game.

6. PXP	BXPch
7. P–B3	B–B1

Black could have prevented White's 8 B–Q3 by 7 . . . . B–R4, which would then threaten KtXP upon the White B move.

8. B–Q3	KKt–K2
9. Kt–K2	P–KKt3
10. O–O	B–Kt2
11. P–KB4	O–O
12. P–KKt4	P–B4
13. PXP e.p.	RXP

Black has succeeded in slowing down the attack on the K side. However, his K side is now full of holes.

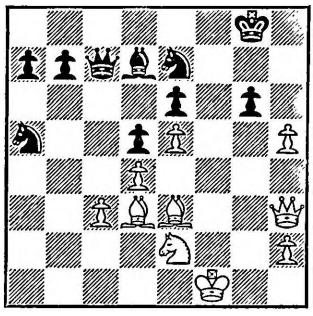
14. Kt–Q2	Q–B2
15. Kt–B3	B–Q2
16. Q–K1	R–B2
17. B–K3	P–KR3
18. Q–R4	QR–KB1
19. K–Kt2	B–B3

Black's Q-side position still lacks mobility, while White has completed his development and is ready for the K-side attack. 20 QXP? now would lose the Q by 20 . . . . R–R2.

20. Q–R3	Kt–R4
21. Kt–K5	BXKt
22. BPXB	RXR
23. RXR	RXR
24. KXR	P–KR4

This P was lost in any event. Black's position now collapses.

25. PXP



25.	....	Kt—B4
26.	BXKt	KPXB
27.	PXP	B—Kt4
28.	QXP	BXKtch
29.	KXB	Q—B5ch
30.	K—B2	Q—B2
31.	B—R6	Resigns

The first Canadian tour went very well, and three months later I was able to spend the Christmas season in Saskatchewan, 1,500 miles West of Toronto. Saskatchewan is one of the most fascinating, rugged parts of the Dominion, and its cities bear ample testimony of the frontier from which they were carved. Their very names tell stories of adventure. I can remember the thriving cities of Swift Current, Indian Head and Moose Jaw, whose growth and spirit were everywhere evident. It was in Moose Jaw, on December 28, 1938, that a player named Jordan almost rewrote the books by playing the Alekhine Defense in a manner never before seen.

ALEKHINE'S DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Jordan
1. P—K4	Kt—KB3
2. Kt—QB3	Kt—B3

Something new in the opening. Black doesn't seem to know that he must challenge the center.

3. P—Q4	P—K4
4. P—Q5	Kt—Q5
5. Kt—B3	B—B4

Black prefers quick development to even material, and I take the risk of suffering an attack with my next move.

6. KtXP?!	Q—K2
7. Kt—Q3	KtXKP
8. KtXKt	QXKtch
9. B—K3	P—Q3

Not 9....QXQP, because of 10 KtXB, QXKt; 11 BXKt.

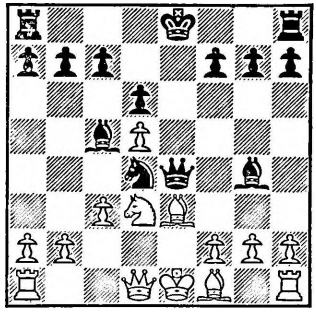
10. P—QB3

This seems best at the time. If 10 KtXB, PXKt; I will have to worry about the defense of the QBP.

10. B—KKt5

Black is in a fighting mood, and makes the best move. If 10.... Kt—B4; then 11 KtXB, PXKt; 12.

Q–Q3, QXQ; 13 BXQ, KtXB; 14 PXKt, with a better P formation. Now the White Q is attacked.



11.	**Q–Q2**	**Kt–B7ch!?**

This interesting sacrifice lends color to the game. Black could have preserved his piece with 11 ....Kt–B4. As it is, White is able to simplify to a won ending by very careful play.

12.	**QXKt**	**BXB**
13.	**PXB**	**QXPch**
14.	**B–K2**	**O–O**

Threatening R–K1.

15. **K–Q1!**

White gets out of the way, and now threatens the Black B.

15.		**B–B4**
16.	**Q–Q2**	**Q–K5**
17.	**Kt–K1!**	**QR–K1**
18.	**R–KB1**	**R–K4**

New threats! White insists on maintaining his piece advantage, and declines the simplification which would have resulted from 19 RXB.

19.	**B–B3**	**Q–QB5**
20.	**R–B2**	**KR–K1**
21.	**R–K2!**	**RXR**
22.	**BXR**	**B–Kt5**

What else can he play?

23.	**BXB**	**QXBch**
24.	**Kt–B3**	**R–K4**
25.	**P–QKt3**	**P–KR3**
26.	**K–B2**	**Q–K5ch**
27.	**K–Kt2**	**RXP**
28.	**Q–K1**	**QXQ**
29.	**RXQ**	Resigns

Among the continuing pleasures of a chessmaster's life are the recurring expressions of amazement in newspaper columns reporting this or that chess event. Even after repeated visits, Canadians still find it possible to rhapsodize about my exhibitions. Here is a sample from the Winnipeg *Free Press* of October 5, 1946:

KOLTANOWSKI WINS EVERYONE

"True, that out of eight games played blindfolded against sixteen opponents he lost one, drew two and won five, but to the hundred spectators and his opponents he was a winner to all. If you can picture in your mind the Y. M. Assembly Hall with eight tables and two worried-looking players at each table, and a mass of spectators weaving

in and out, while in the far corner a placid-looking, heavy-set dark gentleman sat in an arm chair puffing a cigarette, with a bottle of milk beside him, you have a picture of how this affair looks. The caller, who was Mr. P. Chiswell, steps to each board, calls out the number of the board and the move made, and within a few moments Koltanowski calls back his move, and often includes the move that obviously his opponent must make, then giving his additional move. The audience was much amused by the humorous interpolations the Master threw in, and his congenial manner won the hearts of all, especially the ladies, who were there in full force. You would think it would be necessary for him to occasionally ask where some of the pieces were, but not George! Instead he will occasionally say: "Let us check board so-and-so," and he will then call out the position of all the pieces on the board.

"How a man can remember the position of 32 pieces on eight boards, which makes 256 chessmen, is a "Chess State Secret," but if I am ever again asked to name the wonders of the world, in the future I will include George Koltanowski. . . ."

The game which most impressed the chess editor of the *Free Press* was that on the first board, in which I met an irregular defense in truly amateurish fashion. Believe me, I always try to be as kind to my opponents as I would have them be to me. When I have a lost game, I resign. I resign, that is, when I have a single opponent. But when I have a team opposing me, as was the case with this game, my motto is "Never say die!" It seems that whenever there is a team of two or more players working together, the opening is dominated by the strongest player while the ending suffers from the inexperience of the weakest. Don't ask me why. Perhaps someone who has been involved in an unsuccessful partnership can provide the key!

IRREGULAR

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Messrs. "X" & "Y"
1. P–K4	P–Q4
2. PXP	Kt–KB3
3. Kt–QB3	KtXP
4. B–B4	P–QB3
5. Q–B3	P–K3
6. KKt–K2	B–K2
7. O–O	O–O
8. P–Q4	QKt–Q2
9. Kt–Kt3	QKt–B3

White has obtained a quick lead in development, which he proceeds to dissipate through a half-dozen indifferent moves.

10. Kt(B3)–K4 Kt–Kt3
11. B–Q3 KtXKt

Black could have won a P here with QXP, but wisely avoids White's counter, 12 R–Q1.

12. QXKt P–KB4
13. Q–K2 QXP
14. KtXBP!?

I see a clever way to regain my P, and neglect the fact that Black will gain a great deal of space in return.

14. PXKt
15. QXB Kt–Q4!
16. Q–K2 B–Q2
17. P–QB3 Q–KR5
18. B–QB4 QR–K1!
19. BXKtch

Played with the hope of eventually reaching an ending with B's of opposite colors.

19. PXB
20. Q–Q3 B–B3
21. B–K3?

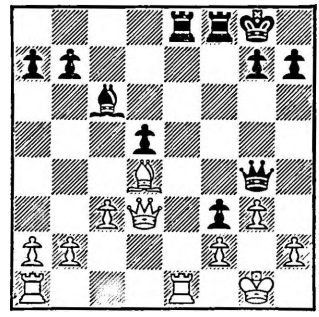
This weak move invites trouble, and trouble marches right in! 21 P–KB4 would have been far better. Watch!

21. P–B5!
22. B–Q4 P–B6!

Properly played! If 23 PXP, then Black will win quickly by R–K3.

23. KR–K1 Q–Kt5
24. P–KKt3

White now counts on 24.... Q–R6, when he could save himself by 25 Q–B1. But...

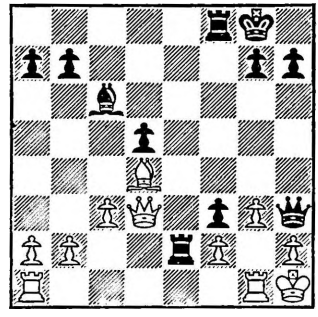


24. R–K7!!

Black plays in masterful style. If now 25 RXR, Q–R6!!, and White is lost. What now, George? Resign? Let's try a few more moves:

25. K–R1 Q–R6
26. R–KKt1

Something must be done about the threat of mate on KKt2.



26. B–Q2??

Hope springs eternal. I would have resigned after 26....R–KB3. Black would then threaten QXPch and R–R3 mate, and 27 BXR would be met by 27....

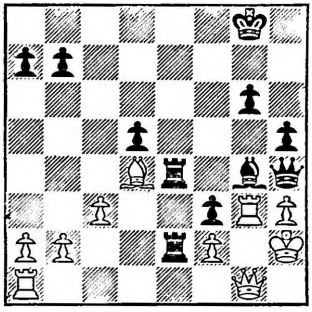
RXBP, after which there is no answer.

27.	P–KKt4	KR–K1
28.	Q–Q1!	BXP

If 28....R–K8; 29 QXR, RXQ; 30 QRXR, and White can still put up a good fight.

29.	R–Kt3	Q–R5
30.	Q–KKt1	P–KR4
31.	P–KR3	R(1)–K5
32.	K–R2	P–KKt3

And now White wakes up, knowing that the game will be lost without some sharp play.



33.	RXBP!	BXR
34.	QXPch	K–B1
35.	B–QB5ch	R–K2
36.	Q–B5ch	K–K1
37.	QXB	P–Kt3
38.	R–KKt1!	Q–K5

If 38....PXB; 39 R–Kt8ch, K–Q2; 40 QXPch with perpetual check!

39.	QXRPch	K–Q2
40.	B–Q4	

The Black attack still has teeth. If White had played 40 BXR, RXPch!; 41 K–Kt3, Q–B5 mate.

40.		Q–B5ch
41.	R–Kt3	K–B3

41....RXPch; 42 BXR, QXB ch; 43 R–Kt2 leads to a draw.

42.	Q–Kt4	Q–QB2
43.	P–QKt4	R(2)–K5
44.	Q–Kt7	QXQ
45.	RXQ	RXRP

White is still lost, but only if Black plays very well. Fortunately, the weaker of my two opponents now begins to make his presence felt.

46.	K–Kt3	R–R8?

With the nasty threat of R–Kt8ch. But this is really a waste of time.

47.	R–KR7	R–R6

Now the threat is 48....RXB.

48.	P–B3	R–K3
49.	P–KB4	P–QR4
50.	P–B5	R–Q3?

Chess is a very, very funny game! Almost any other Rook move would have enabled Black to retain his advantage. Now the P marches ahead!

51.	PXP	PXP
52.	P–B6	R–Kt6
53.	P–B7	R–Kt1
54.	R–R8	R(3)–Q1
55.	RXR	RXR
56.	B–Kt7	K–Kt4
57.	P–B8(Q)	RXQ

58.	BXR	K–B5
59.	P–R4	KXP
60.	P–R5	P–Q5
61.	B–Kt7	P–R5
62.	P–R6	P–R6
63.	P–R7	P–R7
64.	BXPch	KXB
65.	P–R8(Q)ch	Resigns

Caissa, beloved Goddess of Chess, how you smiled on me in this game!

The most active chess organization in Canada is probably that in British Columbia. Its large number of clubs and players prove themselves annually in a monster match with the players of Washington and Oregon. If I were to look for a single phrase which might describe these lovers of chess, it would be this: "They like to be attacked!" Time and again I have found these Western Canadians ready and willing to swap blows in the most complicated of positions, while they rarely seek simplification and the possible draw. This fact first struck me on my first tour, and has been reinforced in more recent visits. Here is an example of British Columbian chess, played in Vancouver during an 8-board blindfold exhibition on October 10, 1946:

GIUOCO PIANO

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	A. Engleman
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	P–Q3
5. P–QB3	Kt–B3
6. P–QKt4	B–Kt3
7. P–QR4	

This is too wild to be sound, but I know that my opponent is made happier by a rapid attack.

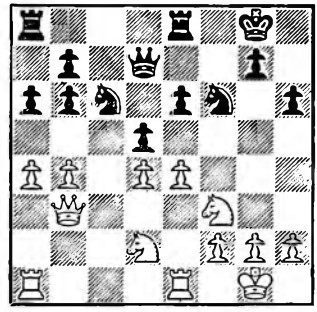
7.		P–QR3?

7 . . . . P–QR4 would immobilize the Q side, and is to be preferred to this passive move.

8.	P–Q3	P–KR3
9.	B–K3	B–K3
10.	QKt–Q2	O–O
11.	BXB(Kt6)	PXB
12.	BXB	PXB
13.	P–Q4!	PXP
14.	PXP	P–Q4

Black wisely rejects 14 . . . . KtXKtP, because of 15 Q–Kt3.

15.	Q–Kt3	Q–Q2
16.	KR–K1	KR–K1



17.	Kt–K5!	KtXKt

17....KtXQP looked tempting, but would have lost a piece because of 18 KtXQ, KtXQ; 19 KtXKtch, PXKt; 20 KtXKt.

18.	PXKt	KtXP
19.	KtXKt	PXKt
20.	QR–Q1	Q–K2
21.	RXP	QR–Q1
22.	R(4)–Q4	RXR
23.	RXR	Q–QB2

The win will depend upon the utilization of the open file.

24.	P–KB4	Q–B2
25.	P–KKt3	R–QB1
26.	R–Q6	R–B3

Black tries to save the P, and thus permits White to enter the 8th rank.

27.	R–Q8ch	K–R2
28.	Q–Q3ch	Q–B4

The only move, for Q–Kt3 and P–KKt3 each loses the Q after the appropriate Rook check or pin.

29.	QXQch	PXQ
30.	R–Q6!	P–QKt4
31.	PXP	PXP
32.	RXR	PXR
33.	K–B2	K–Kt3
34.	K–K3	K–B2
35.	K–Q4	K–K3
36.	K–B5	K–Q2
37.	P–K6ch	Resigns

Black loses his Q-side Pawns.

Some games lend themselves to the description, "a textbook model!" In the Sicilian Defense, White attempts an attack on the K side, Black on the Q side. White must remember to maintain his Q-side defenses, Black his K-side defenses. Should either omit this precaution, the game becomes a perfect example of the way in which White (or Black) should play the opening. The following game was played in an 8-board exhibition at Victoria, B.C., on March 6, 1947:

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Robert Wyllie
1. P–K4	P–QB4
2. P–QKt4	PXP
3. P–Q4	P–Q4
4. P–K5	P–K3
5. B–Q3	Kt–QB3
6. Kt–K2	KKt–K2
7. O–O	Q–B2
8. Kt–Q2	B–Q2
9. P–KB4	P–QR4
10. QKT–B3	Kt–R2
11. P–KKt4	P–KKt3

Thus far, White is attacking on the K side, while Back defends. Now Black seeks counter-play on the Q side.

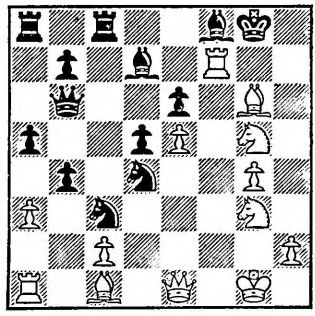
12.	Kt–Kt3	Kt–Kt4
13.	Q–K2	Kt–B6
14.	Q–K3	B–R3
15.	P–QR3	O–O

16.	**Q–K1**	**KR–B1**
17.	**P–B5**	

White has defended on the Q side, and now begins the breakthrough on the K side. Instead of preparing a defense, Black continues his Q-side demonstration.

17.		**B–B1**
18.	**PXP(Kt6)**	**RPXP**
19.	**Kt–Kt5**	**Kt–B3?**
20.	**RXP**	**KtXQP**
21.	**BXP**	**Q–Kt3**

Black's forces are poised on the Q side, ready for attack. He now threatens to win White's Q by Kt–B6ch.



22. **Kt–R5!**

If Black wins the Q he will be mated in two moves!

22.		**Kt–B6 dis. ch.**
23.	**K–R1**	**KtXKt**
24.	**Kt–B6ch**	**K–R1**
25.	**Q–R4ch**	Resigns

CHAPTER EIGHT

Latin America

CHESS IN LATIN AMERICA WAS LONG A QUESTION OF THE SUPPORT given some competent local player or national champion. Chess clubs were usually small and poorly supported. Only where a world figure like Capablanca or Torre or Canal shone forth did one find properly organized chess. As a result, the game remained relatively dormant in most of South and Central America.

World War II changed this picture with astonishing rapidity and with the most beneficent results. Buenos Aires was the host city to the Olympic Chess Tournament in August and September of 1939, a tournament which was sadly interrupted by the outbreak of the war. Poland, which had been leading, refused to play the German team and forfeited the match, losing the title as a result. Germany, because of the reluctance of democratic chess players to play with its representatives, thus became the world's first chess country!

Stranded in Buenos Aires, dozens of players quickly found places for themselves in a chess world which was brought to rapid maturity by their presence. Local chess groups vied with one another to be honored by some world-famous master as their guest or teacher. Tournaments were organized and matches were held regularly, with the result that today the royal game is firmly entrenched as a mass activity in all of Latin America.

CUBA

I have toured Cuba three times since my arrival in the New World, and am always very anxious to return. Perhaps this desire can be explained by the exuberance of the welcome I receive there; perhaps it's due to the happy memory of the amazing

festival of the Comparsas, that incredible phenomenon of an entire people going conga-crazy before your eyes. Then again, perhaps it's because the Cubans love chess as deeply as they do. Imagine, if you can, a nation whose national hero is a chess player! The name of Capablanca remains on every lip, on dozens of buildings and restaurants and clubs, as a memorial for an ever-growing number of public and private functions. To prove that this is a truly national devotion, the Cuban government went to great expense in publishing a magnificent chess book honoring the name and the achievements of the former world champion after his death in 1942.

The leading figure in the island's chess organization today is my friend José Victor Reguiero. "Pepe," as he is affectionately known to his countrymen, is the organizer of much of the chess activity in his own land and in the rest of the Caribbean. It was he who was instrumental in bringing me to Cuba, and I still treasure the letter he sent me on March 11, 1939, after my first visit, in which he says:

"Cuba ha recibido con tu visita una notable inyección de optimismo en el sector ajedrécístico, abriendo una nueva etapa que no tendrá limites, de cuyos triunfos te corresponderá gran parte."

I have visited most of Cuba's chess clubs, including the remote one of Puerto Padres. The trip to this little town was a curious odyssey of unpredictable experiences. Only my guide seemed to know where we were going. We took a bus, then a walk along a dim jungle path to a single-coach train which crept through dense jungle at a walking pace. Finally, we were met by a little boat which fought the surf to deposit me at my destination.

My second tour of the island was heralded by a lengthy feature article by Dr. Miguel A. Urrutia Lleo in *El Nuevo Mundo* of February 18, 1940. Dr. Lleo tried to explain what it was that made Señor Koltanowski a blindfold chess player. The scientist made everything quite simple. The conditions necessary to a good memory are, he said:

"(1) Profundidad de la impresión
(2) Firmeza de las asociaciones de ideas"

In my case, it seemed, memory operated by the exaggeration of sensory impressions, by the visualization of movement, and by a rapid association of ideas. His conclusion, for what it is worth, was:

"El caso del Maestro Koltanowski es pues, una prodigiosa memoria auditiva—es decir una sensación auditiva persistente—al servicio de una sobrehumana facultad de visualización."

The chess players of Latin America, and of Cuba in particular, enjoy a fighting spirit which the rest of us may well envy. A Cuban inter-club match is as hotly contested as the national championship, and the players are as warmly supported by large audiences as any fictional or real bullfighter. This fighting style makes every opponent dangerous, and many a game played on the island derives its special interest from the manner in which one player or the other rescues an apparently lost position by his sheer refusal to admit defeat.

My first Havana exhibition, against 8 boards, was played on March 1, 1939, and saw one of Cuba's many Garcias hitting a stone wall, but counterattacking to the end.

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Enrique Garcia
1. P–K4	P–QB4
2. P–QKt4	P–K3

2 . . . . PXP is better.

3. PXP	BXP
4. P–Q4	B–Kt5ch
5. P–B3	B–K2
6. B–Q3	Kt–KB3
7. Kt–K2	Kt–B3
8. O–O	O–O
9. P–KB4	P–Q3
10. P–KR3	R–K1
11. Kt–Q2	B–B1
12. Kt–B3	P–Q4

Black begins his search for counterplay.

13. P–K5	Kt–K5
14. Q–B2	P–B4
15. PXP e.p.	PXP?!

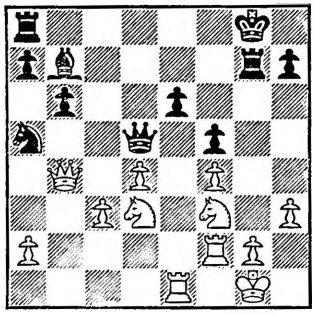
Although it would have been better to recapture with the Kt, Black here offers a P for the possibility of a K side attack.

16. BXKt	PXB
17. QXP	P–B4
18. Q–Kt1	R–K2
19. B–R3	R–Kt2
20. BXB	KXB
21. Q–Kt3	Kt–R4
22. Q–Kt4ch	K–Kt1
23. Kt–B1	Q–Q4
24. Kt–Q3	P–Kt3

Black goes astray with his dreams of attack on the long diagonal. He could have tried Kt–

B5, with the threat of Kt–K6 or Kt–Q7.

25.	R–B2	B–Kt2
26.	QR–K1	



26.		P–KR3

Black could have obtained drawing chances for the ending by 26....QXKt; 27 RXQ, BXR, and, with Rook, Kt and P for Queen, might have been able to defend himself. As he plays, he is slowly and surely pushed back.

27.	Kt(Q3)–K5	K–R2?
28.	Q–Kt1	K–R1
29.	K–R2	Kt–B5
30.	KtXKt	QXKt(B5)
31.	Q–Kt3	B–Q4
32.	QXQ	BXQ
33.	Kt–K5	B–Q4
34.	P–KKt4	

Powerfully posted, the Kt permits White to attack on both wings at once.

34.		QR–KKt1
35.	P–B4	B–K5
36.	R–K3	R–Q1
37.	R–Q2	R(1)–KKt1
38.	P–Q5	

Here goes:

38.		KPXP
39.	BPXP	R–QB2
40.	P–Q6	Resigns

The move 8 P–B3 is my favorite innovation in the Max Lange attack; it has always sufficed to win one or more games in every exhibition in which I've used it. The Cubans reacted against it with typical violence. On my second visit to Havana for an 8-board exhibition March 6, 1939, Angel Perez Abreu learned that one must not attack while his King is exposed.

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Abreu
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–B3
5. P–Q4	BXP
6. KtXB	KtXKt
7. P–B4	P–Q3
8. P–B3	B–Kt5

8....Kt–B3 is better.

9. Q–Q2

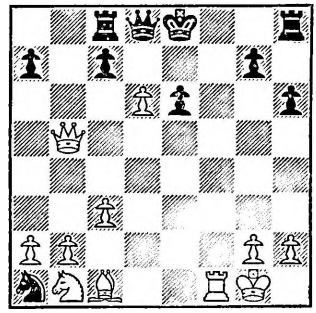
9 Q–R4ch, B–Q2; 10 Q–Q1, B–Kt5 leads to a draw.

9.		KtXP
10.	Q–K3	Kt–QB7
11.	QXKt	KtXR
12.	PXP	B–K3

Best, but insufficient.

13.	BXB	PXB
14.	QXKtP	P–KR3
15.	PXP	R–QB1
16.	Q–Kt5ch	Resigns

Black's resignation was due to the announced forced win in the diagramed position.



(A) 16 Q–Kt5ch, P–B3; 17 Q–R5ch, K–Q2; 18 Q–B7ch, KXP; 19 R–Q1ch wins the Q.

(B) 16 Q–Kt5ch, Q–Q2; 17 Q–R5ch, K–Q1; 18 B–Kt5ch, PXB; 19 QXRch, Q–K1; 20 R–B8 wins.

A good crowd is always a strong incentive for a good show, and the presence of 150 spectators and players at my 8-board demonstration in Santiago de Cuba on February 24, 1940, was just what I needed for a sharp attack on the board on which two of the city's finest players were consulting.

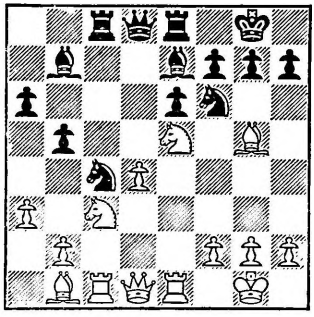
CARO-KANN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Silveira & Jolliet
1. P–K4	P–QB3
2. P–Q4	P–Q4
3. PXP	PXP
4. P–QB4	P–K3
5. Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
6. Kt–B3	Kt–B3
7. B–Q3	PXP
8. BXBP	B–K2
9. O–O	O–O
10. R–K1	P–QR3
11. P–QR3	P–QKt4
12. B–Q3	R–K1

Both Black and White continue to develop their pieces. Of course, Black couldn't have played 12 . . . . KtXP? because of 13 KtXKt, QXKt; 14 BXPch and 15 QXQ.

13.	B–KKt5	B–Kt2
14.	QR–B1	QR–B1
15.	B–Kt1	Kt–QR4
16.	Kt–K5	Kt–B5?

P–KR3 was better. Now Black receives a nasty jolt!



17.	B×Kt	B×B
18.	B×Pch	K–B1

If 18....K×B; 19 Q–R5ch, K–Kt1; 20 Q×BPch, K–R1; 21 Q×B(Kt7).

19.	Q–R5	B×Kt
20.	P×B	Q–Q7?

Always attacking! Better was Kt×KtP. The Q is needed for the defense of the K position.

21.	B–K4	B×B
22.	Kt×B	Q×KtP
23.	R×Kt!	P×R
24.	Kt–Q6	K–Kt1

Best. If 24....R–B2; 25 Q–R8ch wins. If 24....R–K2??; 25 Q–R8 mate.

25.	Q×Pch	K–R2
26.	Kt×R(K8)	R×Kt
27.	Q–R5ch	K–Kt1
28.	Q×Rch	Resigns

A Rook is a little too much of a handicap to overcome.

Guatemala

Blindfold play proved a welcome addition to the chess diet of little Guatemala. So great was the demand for boards on my first appearance in Guatemala City, "the city of eternal spring," that the arrangements committee had to set three players at each board. The results, 6 wins and 2 draws, caused the chess editor of one local paper to enthuse:

KOLTANOWSKI SE REVELA COMO UN CEREBRO MAGICO EN AJEDREZ

"...Nuestro público, al menos los aficionados de cierto categoria, estaban advertidos del extraordinario mérito del maestro Koltanowski, pero aun asi se quemaban anoche las manos en el frenesi del aplauso, tributando el más caluroso homenaje de admiración al privilegiado cerebro del campeón belga."

DUTCH DEFENSE

White	*Black*
	D. Vella, M. Russ & H. Cohn
Koltanowski	
1. P–Q4	P–KB4
2. P–K4	

I have never been able to understand why it is that my blindfold play is so much more forceful than that over the board. Perhaps it's my love of a problem that makes me willing to complicate a blindfold position. Perhaps it's

because there's nothing to lose but a game in an exhibition, while a tournament game may mean a prize won or lost. Who knows?

2.		PXP
3.	Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
4.	P–KB3	P–Q4

Better is 4....PXP followed by 5....P–Q4.

5.	PXP	PXP
6.	B–KKt5	B–B4
7.	KKt–K2	QKt–Q2
8.	Kt–Kt3	P–KKt3
9.	B–K2	P–KR4

Played to avoid 10 KtXB and 11 B–R5ch.

10.	O–O	B–Kt5
11.	Kt(Kt3)XKP	B–Kt2
12.	BXB	PXB
13.	Q–Q3!	

This move wins the game, as Black cannot prevent the entry of the Q on the K side.

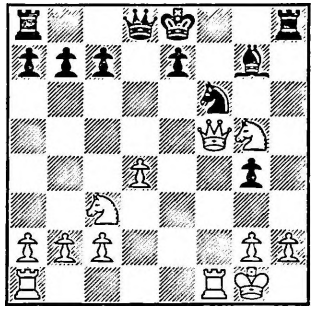
13.		K–B2

The only way to save the Pawn —for the moment.

14.	BXKt	KtXB
15.	Kt–Kt5ch	K–K1

Now Black must save his Queen. If 15....K–Kt1; 16 Q–B4ch!

16.	QXPch	K–Q2
17.	Q–B5ch	K–K1



18. Kt–Kt5!!

Far superior to the immediate capture of the B on Kt7. The Kt on Kt5 prevents the exit of the Black Queen (18....Q–Q4; 19 KtXPch).

18.		Q–Q2
19.	Q–Kt6ch	K–Q1
20.	QXB	R–R4
21.	RXKt!	PXR
22.	Kt–B7ch	K–B1
23.	Q–B8ch	Q–Q1
24.	QXQ mate	

While in Guatemala City I gave two blindfold exhibitions against the national team which was to represent Guatemala at Buenos Aires later that year. This was a real test. I won all five games the first time and scored 3½ points in the repeat performance. Since this was one of my best exhibitions, all five games played on March 23, 1939, seem worth your attention:

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Ing. Vassaux	Koltanowski
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. P–QB4	P–KKt3
3. Kt–QB3	B–Kt2
4. P–K4	P–Q3
5. Kt–KB3	

Safer than 5 P–KB4.

5.	O–O
6. B–K3	P–B3
7. B–K2	

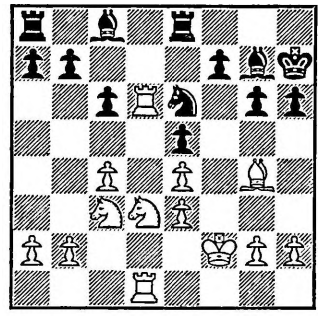
Too tame. White should have prepared to castle on the Q side.

7.	Kt–Kt5
8. O–O	KtXB
9. PXKt	Kt–Q2
10. Q–Q2	P–K4
11. QR–Q1	Q–K2
12. PXP	PXP
13. Q–Q6	

White decides to play for the draw. His doubled Pawns, however, prove to be a lasting weakness.

13.	R–K1
14. QXQ	RXQ
15. R–Q6	P–KR3
16. KR–Q1	K–R2
17. Kt–K1	Kt–B1
18. Kt–Q3	Kt–K3
19. B–Kt4	R–K1
20. K–B2?	

White ignores the advanced position of his R, and loses the exchange.



20.	B–B1
21. KtXP	BXR
22. RXB	K–Kt2
23. K–Kt3	Kt–B4
24. Kt–Q7?	

Another weak move which results in a quick finish.

24.	BXKt
25. BXB	KR–Q1
Resigns	

The second game saw my Guatemalan opponent religiously developing his pieces, and at the same time neglecting the defense of his King.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Ing. Cruz
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. P–QB4	P–QB3
3. P–K3	Kt–B3
4. Kt–QB3	P–K3
5. Kt–B3	QKt–Q2
6. B–Q3	B–Q3
7. O–O	O–O

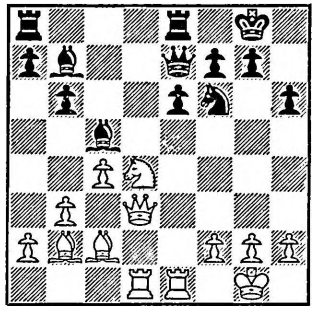
White has achieved a position which points a moral for every chessplayer. Black has made no

effort to prevent White's P–K4, and this freeing move will allow White to dictate the course of play from here on.

8.	**P–K4!**	**PXKP**
9.	**KtXP**	**KtXKt**
10.	**BXKt**	**P–KR3**
11.	**Q–K2**	**Kt–B3**
12.	**B–B2**	**P–QKt3**
13.	**P–QKt3**	**B–Kt2**
14.	**B–Kt2**	**P–B4**
15.	**QR–Q1**	**Q–K2**
16.	**KR–K1**	**KR–K1**
17.	**Q–Q3**	

White now threatens PXP, BXKt, and the entry of the Q at R7.

17.		**PXP**
18.	**KtXP**	**B–B4**



19.	**Kt–B5**	**Q–B2**
20.	**KtXRPch**	**PXKt**
21.	**BXKt**	**BXPch**

A last attempt to prevent Q–R7ch. If 22 KXB, Q–B5ch; 23 K moves, QXB.

22.	**K–R1**	Resigns

On the third board, Luis Asturias tried to win quickly, and threw theory, caution, and finally his game to the winds.

VIENNA OPENING

White	*Black*
Asturias	Koltanowski
1. P–K4	**P–K4**
2. Kt–QB3	**Kt–KB3**
3. B–B4	**KtXP**
4. BXPch?	

4 Q–R5 is so much stronger that this move must be regarded as an error.

4.		**KXB**
5.	**KtXKt**	**P–Q4**
6.	**Q–R5ch?**	

This check looks good at first glance, but loses several tempi.

6.		**K–Kt1**
7.	**Kt–Kt5?**	

Losing a piece.

7.		**P–KKt3**
8.	**Q–B3**	

If 8 Q–R4, B–K2; 9 P–Q3, P–KR3.

8.		**QXKt**
9.	**QXPch**	**K–Kt2**
10.	**P–Q4**	**Q–KB4**
11.	**QXPch**	**QXQ**
12.	**PXQ**	**B–KB4**
13.	**P–QB3**	**Kt–B3**
14.	**P–KB4**	**P–KKt4**
15.	**Kt–B3**	**PXP**
16.	**BXP**	**B–K2**
17.	**O–O–O**	**QR–Q1**

18.	Kt–Q4	KtXKt	*23.*	B–Kt5	R–QB1
19.	PXKt	B–K3	*24.*	B–B6ch	K–Kt3
20.	P–QR3	P–B4	*25.*	K–Q2	R–B2
21.	PXP	RXRch	*26.*	K–K2??	B–Kt5ch
22.	RXR	BXP		Resigns	

On the fourth board, J. Salazar allowed the Colle System to penetrate his K side and lost a short game in which Philidor's Legacy again proved its practical worth.

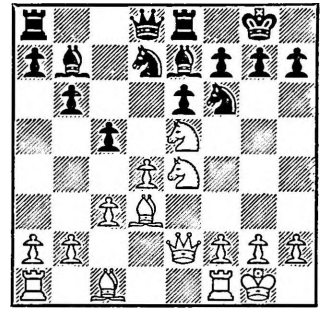
COLLE OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Salazar
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–KB3	P–K3
3. P–K3	P–Q4
4. B–Q3	B–K2
5. QKt–Q2	QKt–Q2
6. O–O	O–O
7. Q–K2	R–K1
8. P–K4	

The key move of the Colle.

8.		PXP
9.	KtXP	P–B4
10.	P–B3	P–QKt3
11.	Kt–K5	B–Kt2

Black is so busy developing himself that he overlooks:



12. KtXKBP! Q–B2

If 12 . . . . KXKt; 13 Kt–Kt5ch, K–Kt1 (K–B1 loses the Q after 14 KtXKPch); 14 QXPch, with the same finish as in the game.

13.	Kt(7)–Kt5	BXKt
14.	BXB	KtXB
15.	QXKt	Kt–B3?

Kt–B1 was necessary. White now announces mate in 5.

16.	QXKPch	K–R1
17.	Kt–B7ch	K–Kt1
18.	Kt–R6 dbl. ch.	K–R1
19.	Q–Kt8ch	RXQ
20.	Kt–B7 mate	

On the fifth and last board, Joaquin Antillon went astray while hunting a Queen which moved too rapidly for him.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Antillon	Koltanowski
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. P–QB4	P–KKt3
3. Kt–QB3	B–Kt2
4. P–K4	P–Q3
5. P–B4	O–O
6. Kt–B3	P–B4
7. P–Q5	P–K3
8. B–Q3	PXP
9. BPXP	Q–Kt3
10. Kt–QR4	Q–B2
11. O–O	P–B5
12. B–B2	QKt–Q2
13. R–K1	R–K1
14. R–Kt1	P–QKt4
15. Kt–B3	Q–R4
16. P–QKt4	PXP e.p.
17. RXP	Kt–B4
18. R–Kt1	

White has played well to this point. He should now play 18 R–R3, but is under the delusion that he can trap the Black Q.

18.	QXKt
19. B–Q2	Q–B5
20. R–Kt4	QXRP
21. B–B3	B–Kt5
22. P–K5	KtXQP

White must lose additional material, and so resigns.

El Salvador

The trip from Guatemala City to San Salvador, in El Salvador, provides new evidence of the wonders of modern transportation. By plane, one hour suffices; by automobile, seven hours; by train, a full day. Experienced travelers always fly, but the Koltanowskis were adventurous and hired a car for the round trip. We wanted a nice touring car, open top and plenty of air, but the driver shook his head and insisted that we use a sedan "whose windows work well."

The trip, including my appearances in San Salvador, would require four and a half days. We started early on a Monday morning, as I was due for a simultaneous exhibition that evening. We had, the driver informed me, every opportunity for a very quiet trip, and off we drove with the sound of a happy folk song drifting away in our eager ears.

The road took us over one ridge of hills and then another, through forests and over rivers large and small. We encountered several large herds of cattle coming to Guatemala from distant

Honduras. Border control is, of necessity, weak throughout Latin America, and these herdsmen were on their way to sell their stock in exchange for quetzals, the Guatemalan monetary unit which (officially) is equal in value to the American dollar. The inducement was certainly a significant one, for the cattlemen traveled on foot for weeks to get their herds to this market.

Early in the afternoon we ran into a swarm of locusts, so dense that darkness seemed to have fallen. At our driver's command, we quickly closed our windows. The operation could not have required more than fifteen seconds, but in that short space of time the floor of the car was covered by the insects to a depth of several inches. We spent the next hour picking them up and forcing them through a tiny crack in one of the rear windows.

This incident woke me up, for the rapidly increasing heat had made us quite drowsy. The journey was proving tiresome, and especially so because of our descent from the 5,000-foot altitude of Guatemala to sea level.

Every traveler remembers some particularly beautiful sight from every visit to the scenic wonderland which is Central America. On that trip, I saw mine near the the border when we passed a large lake. Its surface seemed to be covered by a large variety of colorful birds, each one graceful and secure in the quiet region of his home. My thought was that nowhere else in the world could such a profusion of bird life long endure.

Let's return to chess. El Salvador boasts a well-kept highway system, and, once over the border, we moved at a good speed. Santa Ana was the first town we reached, and we stopped at an inn to refresh ourselves. Our driver spent his rest period in glowing descriptions of his illustrious passengers. Before we left, the inn was crowded with several dozen local chess players.

San Salvador was reached in the late afternoon, after a journey which made me a permanent convert to air travel. A well-organized reception committee awaited us. Sending my wife to bed, I spent several hours with reporters and photographers and the insistent companionship of a never-ending list of officials. When I finally escaped, I had just enough time to bathe before it was 8:15 and time for my first contact with this little country's chess population.

The 30-board exhibition required four hours, and should have been over in two. I discovered that the players of El Salvador were no stronger than the amateurs of other Latin American countries. They played the same style as those in Guatemala. There was, however, one important difference—this crew never resigned! Every game had to go on until someone was mated. Are they discourteous, or can they withstand the heat better than visiting masters? Whatever the reason, this habit proved a serious strain.

The next night I gave my first blindfold exhibition, and again nobody resigned! After finishing (I won 3, lost 2 and drew 1), I took it upon myself to explain to them that this attitude was destructive to their playing strength. I could see how my remarks damaged their pride, and was certain that I had committed a major breach of etiquette when no one visited me on the next day. However, every one of my opponents called on Thursday morning to offer his apologies. It seems that the night before the best players of the city had held some sort of conference, and had come to the conclusion that I was absolutely justified in my criticism. So, I had made a staunch band of friends in El Salvador after all.

That evening I played 8 games, blindfolded, winning 7 and drawing 1. The display was over in record time, several of my opponents resigning when I had but won a pawn or two. Next morning, as we entered our car for the return trip to Guatemala, a large crowd gathered to give me a rousing send-off. Apparently, I had done some good for international chess by convincing this earnest band of players that the game was also a real test of character, and that he who cannot take a licking had better look for another hobby!

The return trip to Guatemala was especially happy for me. I was richer in experience, richer in friends, and, best of all to a struggling chess master, I was richer in funds—for my wife had been so weakened by the heat that she failed to carry out a threatened shopping trip! I returned, of course, with several new games for my files, the best of which was a nip-and-tuck affair against Sandoval in the second exhibition in May, 1939.

ENGLISH OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Sandoval
1. P–QB4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–QB3	P–K3
3. P–Q4	P–Q4
4. B–Kt5	

The game is transposed to the regular Queen's Gambit Declined.

4.	QKt–Q2
5. P–K3	P–B3
6. P–QR3	B–Q3

6 . . . . B–K2 is better.

7. Kt–B3	O–O
8. B–Q3	PXP
9. BXP	P–QKt3

Black could hardly play 9 . . . . P–K4 because of 10 Kt–K4.

10. O–O	Q–B2
11. R–B1	P–QR3
12. B–R2	B–Kt2
13. P–K4	

Action at last! White threatens a K side onslaught beginning with P–K5.

13.	P–K4
14. PXP	BXP
15. KtXB	QXKt
16. P–B4	

Attack and defense!

16.	Q–Kt1

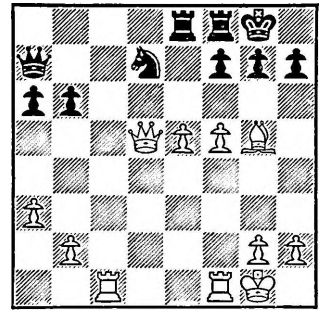
If 16 . . . . Q–B4ch, White obtains the better game by 17 K–R1, P–KR3; 18 Kt–Q5, Q–R4 (best); 19 KtXKtch, KtXKt; 20 BXKt, PXB; 21 R–QB3, P–QB4; 22 R–Kt3ch, K–R1; 23 Q–R5.

17. P–K5	Kt–Q4

If Kt–K1, then 18 B–K7

18. KtXKt	PXKt
19. BXP	BXB
20. QXB	Q–R2
21. P–B5	QR–K1

White's advantage of one P suffices to win the game, especially since Black cannot avoid a wholesale exchange of material.



22. P–K6!	PXP
23. PXP	Kt–B3
24. BXKt	PXB
25. P–K7ch	R–B2
26. RXP	QXP

Defense and attack!

27. QR–KB1	R–KB1
28. RXR	RXR
29. QXRch	QXQ
30. RXQ	KXR
31. K–B2	Resigns

The extra P will decide.

Mexico

Have you ever heard a chess master cry?

It really wasn't my fault. I doubt that it was anybody's fault. It was, I know now, simply that I didn't understand the customs of a country in which everything moves slowly—and then more slowly.

On one occasion, during a blindfold exhibition in Havana, I made the acquaintance of an honored guest, the Mexican Ambassador to Cuba. He was a charming man and, although he lost, expressed himself as most favorably impressed by my performance. A few days later, I received a beautiful chess set of ivory and rare woods, carved by some Mexican craftsman. With it came an invitation to visit the sender, and I did so the same day.

No, the gift was nothing. The Maestro need not thank him. Perhaps the Maestro would permit the Ambassador to do his own country a service. I must visit Mexico. I must tour the country. My expenses would be paid. My hotel accommodations would be those of a visiting dignitary. The Mexican government would give me a fee which was indeed interesting. To say no would be an insult. Had I not accepted his little gift?

This was wonderful! I accepted, indicating that I would be available as soon as my visit to Central America had been completed. That was fine. I would hear from the Mexican Minister of Sports, Major Trujillo, as soon as I arrived in Guatemala. This was in February, 1939.

By April, I still had no news. Accordingly, I wrote to the Ambassador, and soon had a reply containing the official invitation. Mexico City requested my presence for fourteen days, and asked for only seven exhibitions during that time. I wired that I would arrive May 15, and requested my railway fare to and from Guatemala City.

I received an answer a week later. The arrangements had been completed. A suite of rooms and the run of the hotel would await me at the Hotel Nacional. My tickets would be available at the offices of the Mexican consul in Guatemala City. This was fine. The consul was a friend of mine, a chess player and a sportsman.

Had I not won ten dollars from him just a few days earlier, when I had picked Joe Louis to defend his title successfully?

The consul's secretary expected me. Of course, the money was there. Would I sign this paper, and that paper, and these forms? The consul would now give me my money. Did I have a visa to enter Mexico? Oh, he had not received any orders on this score. No, nothing can be done without specific instructions from Mexico City. But wait! If I bought a through ticket to Laredo, Texas, he could give me a transit visa which would permit me to remain in Mexico for three months.

What sort of bullfight was this? He had just given me the money sent by his government. Copies of my correspondence and of my official invitation were before him. He knew that I was a guest of his government, and it was his duty to approve my visa. But no! He was sorry, and could only shrug his shoulders. No orders. No specific approval from Mexico City. So sorry.

I rushed to the telegraph office and sent a strongly worded telegram to the Minister of Sports. His reply came within twenty-four hours. "GO TO CONSUL. ALL TAKEN CARE OF." This time I strutted into the office of the reluctant official, telegram in hand. Without saying a word, I laid the wire in front of him. Once again, he smiled and shrugged his shoulders. How nice! Then perhaps he would receive instructions about me soon. No, no word yet. Perhaps tomorrow. Logical, no?

I walked out of the consulate, returned to the hotel, and fretted. I had to leave in two days. If I left at 8 A.M. for Ayutla, I could take a little flatboat ferry across the border, spend the night on the Mexican side, and then catch the Pullman train that left for Vera Cruz every three days. This trip would require an additional three days, for the train stopped at every village en route for as long an interval as any passenger desired. From Vera Cruz a crack train might get me into Mexico City in as little as twelve hours.

I began to wonder whether the consul was angry with me. Perhaps I had insulted him in some way? But no, he was always so thoughtful and so polite. Sorry, no word yet. Perhaps tomorrow. I phoned him every hour on the hour, and still his polite

urbanity persisted. I pleaded; I threatened; I argued; I screamed! No visa. So sorry. Perhaps tomorrow.

Time was certainly growing short. Should I return the money? No, that would be impossible, for the cancellation of the tour would probably mean that no Latin American country would again have faith in me. These people were too interested in chess for me to risk that! I would go, visa or no visa. At the worst, I might be sent back from the Mexican border. Then I could at least prove that I had tried to meet my obligations. On the 9th, with no visa in sight, I packed to leave the next morning.

The sun was blazing when I arrived at the Mexican side of the border. This was one of the hottest days I had ever known, and this sweating, steaming jungle village did nothing to ease the resentment which had piled up within me. The officer in charge had little to offer. He simply didn't know what to do with me. I would have to return, for no visa meant no entry. So sorry.

I blew up in fine style. I was the guest of the government. He would spend a year in jail if he dared to impede my progress! What was his name? He gave it to me with an air of surprise, and, after a careful examination of my papers, promised to contact Mexico City at once. Could I wait until confirmation was obtained. It would only take three or four days. This would bring me into Mexico City on the 18th. No! I would return at once, and his head would certainly roll when I had notified the consul in Guatemala City! But the barge (a rotting rowboat which had shipped water continually when I crossed the river) was being repaired. I couldn't return. If the Maestro would spend the night in the hotel, they would let him know their decision before train time the next morning. And, please, the Maestro would have to understand that they were only following the official procedure.

The hotel was an experience in itself. This broken-down wooden building, its doors on loose hinges, its food an overcooked mess of greens, was blessed with the largest roaches I had ever seen. They were nightmare size, and ready to eat anything. I spent the night standing on my bed, batting at oversize mosquitoes and keeping an eye open for invading roaches. The heat became more oppressive each minute; only the plentiful

supply of cold beer (at only 5 centavos a bottle) saved me from complete prostration. My only compensation was one of my favorite Flemish proverbs: "In time of need the devil eats flies."

No one called for me that evening. Since the train was due at 6 A.M., I left early for the office of the customs guard to obtain my clearance. No one was there. I searched the station for some evidence of official Mexico, but to no avail. I carried my luggage to the platform and, when the train arrived, I used my reservation ticket to obtain a good seat. The train was scheduled to leave at 6:45. Shortly before that time, the customs guard walked through the train to check papers. When he arrived at the door of my car, however, he smiled sheepishly and stepped off the train. What a relief! Who was it said that it's just as good to make your opponent think that you're attacking him as it is to really attack?

The trip, stroll-on-wheels though it was, brought me to Vera Cruz in a very happy mood. It had provided me with a wonderful cross section of the life and peoples of Mexico, the abundance of fruit and color and varying customs and happy times. Perhaps it was just the consular and customs officials who were inconsiderate. Everybody else was so nice!

The trip to Mexico City from Vera Cruz made me feel back in the Twentieth Century again. I arrived to the tune of the usual (for Latin America) gala reception. A military band awaited me, playing loudly enough so that everyone had to shout in order to be heard. Several dozen uniformed personalities crowded about, and all I could hear of the introductions was "Colonel" this and "General" that. With the band still blaring behind us, they escorted me to the hotel and left me at my suite with the advice that I had best rest for a few hours in preparation of the visit of an unnamed, important government official. How nice! I had arrived at last; my troubles were over. I bathed, shaved and dressed for the occasion—but no one came that day.

The next day the papers carried a feature story on my arrival, complete with pictures of the welcoming committee. I called the Minister of Sports and was informed that Major Trujillo was not in yet. However, he was expected at any moment. Perhaps I would find it convenient to come down to the office. I did so, and

waited for him at least two hours. He arrived shortly after noon, and accorded me the most enthusiastic welcome I have ever known. Much as I wanted to, I had no opportunity to mention the visa incidents. So be it, then. Could he tell me where and when I was to play? Play? But of course the Maestro knew that he was to play at the home of the Minister of War? This was to be the first exhibition; no other could precede it. The Minister of War was a most important personage. Of course, nothing official had been decided as yet. The Minister of War was a very busy personage. But the Maestro needn't worry; everything was at government expense. Perhaps he could use a rest of two or three days? This would give the government time to arrange the exhibitions. Besides, why not take it easy?

This sounded fine. I was to spend two weeks in Mexico City, and so long as I played the agreed number of exhibitions I didn't care what plans were made for my free days. But it was understood that I had to return to Guatemala City at the end of the month? Of course, of course. Back to the hotel, Maestro, and take it easy.

I took it easy for a week. I saw the sights; I went to the movies; I was introduced to the bullfights of Mexico; I had a guest box at the theater. I had only to call the Minister's Secretary and my requests were honored. I went to restaurants and baseball games and concerts and swimming pools. I was the guest of the Mexican Government, but I was a very bored chess master.

I tried to contact Major Trujillo time and again. So sorry. Major Trujillo has been sent out of town on most urgent business of the government. Perhaps he will be back again tomorrow. So sorry.

At first, I phoned the Major's office daily. Then I phoned two, three, five, ten times a day. I left messages and requests and demands and threats. I begged, I pleaded, I stuttered, I got drunk. Nothing helped. On the eleventh day I decided upon a course of action. I could not cheat the Mexican Government out of its money. I wrote a stiff note to Major Trujillo, informing him that I intended to leave Mexico in three days unless I heard from him. This, I was certain, would bring action.

The next two days dragged and dragged. My nights were

wakeful and worried. Could I leave Mexico without even *one* exhibition?

Then, at 2 A.M. of the third day, my telephone rang. This was common enough in Latin American hotels. Somebody is always anxious to do something in the middle of the night.

"Hello," I said.

"Señor Koltanowski?" It was a woman's voice.

"Yes."

"I am calling for Major Trujillo."

"Yes." I was now completely awake.

"He wants you to join him immediately. He awaits you at the Blue Lagoon. It is a night club in Chapultepec."

I dropped the receiver, and was on my way in five minutes. A taxi brought me to the club before 2:30. A small band was blaring a conga, the dance-floor was crowded, and Major Trujillo was there. I walked up to him. He put aside his highball and jumped to his feet. "Poor Koltanowski!" he said. That stunned me. "Yes," he went on, "I know what it means to feel lonely. But I am so sorry. I must tell you that nothing has been arranged for you as yet."

This was too much. To be awakened at two in the morning, to be dragged to this dive, and then to be told that nothing had been arranged, was enough to bring the tears to my eyes. I don't know what came over me at that moment, but there they were—great big tears falling down my cheeks and sobs bursting out of my tightened chest. The master broke down and cried.

The Major was most sympathetic. We had a drink. We had another drink. We kept having drinks, and then someone took me back to my hotel. I woke up next morning with an oversize head and a clear decision. I rushed over to the Major's office. I had to see him. He wasn't in yet? Either he arrived or the President of Mexico would take the appropriate action. So he was called, and arrived, and agreed to my plan. Koltanowski wasn't going to leave without at least one blindfold exhibition.

"Give me written permission," I insisted, "to represent you in arranging an exhibition for this visiting chess master. Tell me where to go and whom to see, and I will arrange an exhibition at once!"

The Major liked the idea, and gave me the necessary credentials. By that evening I was able to report that I had seven clubs lined up. Now it was up to him to get to the Minister of War. He did so, and I gave my exhibition. It was sufficiently successful so that the next week saw me giving nine exhibitions in the capital. Would I stay in the country long enough to tour the provinces at government expense? Not unless the Minister of Sports accompanies me!

Sometimes a strong player loses a game without knowing why. Too often, the answer lies in his cautious approach to the middle game. In this game, one of 10 in a blindfold exhibition in Mexico City in June, 1939, Black obtains a good game and then, beginning with his 18th move, looks for shadows.

COLLE SYSTEM

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	R. Zavala & E. Noncalián
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–KB3	P–K3
3. P–K3	P–Q4
4. B–Q3	P–B4

A classic defense against the Colle.

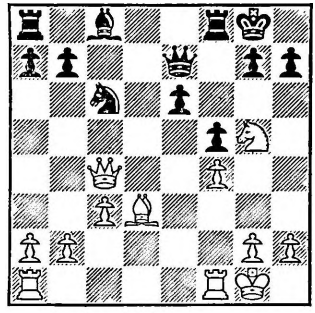
5. P–B3	Kt–B3

Second-best. QKt-Q2 is stronger, as it makes White's plan of opening the center more difficult of achievement.

6. QKt–Q2	Q–B2
7. O–O	B–K2
8. PXP	BXP
9. P–K4	PXP
10. KtXP	B–K2

If 10....KtXKt; 11 BXKt, O–O; 12 BXRPch wins.

11. Q–K2	O–O
12. B–KKt5	KtXKt
13. QXKt	P–KB4
14. Q–QB4	BXB
15. KtXB	Q–K2
16. P–B4	



16.	Kt–K4!

Well played, since it creates a weak KP for White.

17. PXKt	QXKt
18. R–B3	K–R1?

Too much caution for a good position! Black would have retained a fine game by developing his B.

19. R–Q1	R–Q1
20. Q–B7	R–Q2

21.	**Q–B5**	**Q–Q1**
22.	**R(B3)–B1**	**R–Q4**

Not 22....RXB?; 23 RXR, QXR; 24 Q–B8 mate.

23. **B–B2!**

The winning move. If 23.... RXQ??; 24 RXQ mate.

23.		**P–QKt3**
24.	**RXR**	**PXR**
25.	**Q–Q6!**	**QXQ**
26.	**PXQ**	**P–Kt3**
27.	**B–R4**	**B–R3**

If 27.... B–K3; 28 R–K1, B–B2; 29 P–Q7, and 28 R–K8 wins.

28. **R–K1** Resigns

In Mexico City, as in every other city I have visited, some players tried to confuse the blindfold player by inventing new irregular defenses. A 10-board display at the Casino Israelita on June 7, 1939, saw a player named Bondani surpass all previous irregular openings.

IRREGULAR!

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	C. Bondani
1. **P–K4**	**P–KKt3**
2. **P–Q4**	**P–Q3**
3. **P–KB4**	**B–Kt2**
4. **Kt–KB3**	**P–K3**

Very unusual.

5.	**B–Q3**	**Kt–QB3**
6.	**P–B3**	**KKt–K2**
7.	**O–O**	**P–B3**

Whom is he trying to fool?

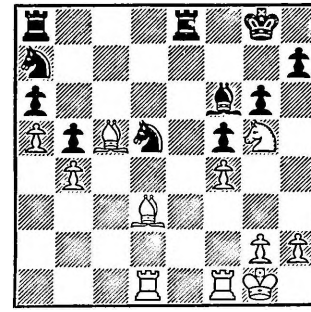
8.	**P–QKt4**	**P–QR3**
9.	**P–QR4**	**B–Q2**
10.	**B–K3**	**Kt–R2**
11.	**QKt–Q2**	**P–KB4**

Black comes out of his shell at long last, but with the inferior position.

12.	**Q–K2**	**P–QKt4**
13.	**P–R5**	**P–B4**
14.	**QPXP**	**QPXP**
15.	**BXP**	**BXP**
16.	**QR–B1**	**B–KB3**
17.	**PXP**	**KPXP**
18.	**Kt–K5**	**O–O**

It must have hurt Black to castle after so assiduously avoiding it. Unfortunately for him, the lines are now open for attack.

19.	**KtXB**	**QXKt**
20.	**Kt–B3**	**KR–K1**
21.	**QR–Q1**	**Q–B2**
22.	**Kt–Kt5**	**Q–B3**
23.	**Q–R2ch**	**Q–Q4**
24.	**QXQch**	**KtXQ**



25. **BXBP!**

A strong move. Now a series of crises develop.

25.		KtXBP
26.	B–Q7	R–K7
27.	KtXRP!	

Better than RXKt.

27.		RXPch?

27 . . . . B–K4 was better. Now three of Black's pieces are en prise.

28.	K–R1	B–K4
29.	Kt–B6ch!	BXKt
30.	RXKt	B–K4
31.	B–K6ch	Resigns

If 31 . . . . K–Kt2; 32 R–B7ch wins a Rook, while 31 . . . . K–R1 permits 32 R–R4ch.

Puerto Rico

An invitation from the Minister of Sports brought me to Puerto Rico in April, 1946, for four blindfold exhibitions of 8 games each. They were played at Ponce, Guayama, Yauco and San Juan. The island is really worth more than so short a visit, and I look forward to meeting its players again soon.

I wonder how many of the readers of this book will begin to wonder about the many Koltanowski wins which crowd its pages. Does this fellow think he can convince us that he never loses a game? No, and I have no intention of so doing. In fact, here is one of my losses, the only game I lost in the four exhibitions in Puerto Rico. It was played in San Juan on April 17, 1946.

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	J. M. Gonzalez
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	Kt–B3
4. O–O	B–B4
5. P–Q4	BXP
6. KtXB	KtXKt
7. P–KB4	P–Q3
8. P–B3	Kt–B3
9. P–B5	O–O?

A poor move. Black must prevent B–Kt5 by playing P–KR3.

10.	B–KKt5	Kt–QR4
11.	B–Q3	P–QKt3
12.	Q–B3	B–Kt2
13.	P–QKt4	Kt–B3
14.	B–QB4	P–QR4

Black plays well. This move forces White's reply, and thus makes the square QB4 available for a Black Kt(Kt–Kt1–Q2–B4).

15.	P–Kt5	Kt–R2?
16.	Kt–Q2	Q–K2
17.	K–R1	

To avoid a check on the Black diagonal and to make room for a possible attack on the KKt file.

17.		K–R1
18.	P–QR4	QR–B1

Black has failed to occupy QB4 with his Kt, and now finds it necessary to squirm on the Q side.

19.	QR–Q1	KR–Q1
20.	B–Kt3	P–B3
21.	P–B4	

White refuses to allow Black to free his position.

21.		P–B4

Black despairs of any counter-attack. Better was R–B2 and Kt–QB1, thus bringing the Kt back into the game.

22.	B–B2	R–Q2
23.	R–B2	QR–Q1
24.	Kt–B1	Kt–B1
25.	Kt–K3	

White begins to bring his pieces to the K side.

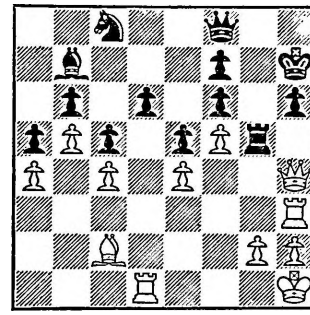
25.		P–KR3
26.	B–R4	K–R2
27.	Kt–Kt4	R–Kt1
28.	BXKt?	

Too soon. 28 Q–KR3 wins immediately, for Black will then have no defense against BXKt. For example, if 28.... P–Kt4; 29 PXP e.p. kills quickly.

28.		PXB
29.	Q–KR3	RXKt

Best. If 29.... Q–B1?; 30 KtXBPch, etc.

30.	QXR	R–Q1
31.	R–B3	R–Kt1
32.	Q–R4	R–Kt4
33.	R–KR3	Q–B1



Black can, at best, draw in this position. White's best plan would have been 34 P–KKt4, with a later P–KR4 and an attempt to attack on the K side. Instead of that he plays:

34. RXQP??

A terrific blunder. Why? There's really no explanation for it. Thank Heavens, these blunders are very rare! My wife insists that they prove that blindfold players are human too!

34.		KtXR

White had overlooked that the Kt was protecting the P, and had reckoned on 34.... QXR; 35 QXRPch, K–Kt1; 36 Q–R8 mate. However, after the blunder, there was only one thing to do: Resign.

Colombia

The Olympic Games of the Central American and Caribbean countries included a chess tournament for the regional Olympic Team Championship. Play took place in Barranquilla December

8-26, 1946. I had been invited to act as tournament director for this spirited competition, in which Cuba won and the host team of Colombia finished second.

At 8:30 P.M. on December 27 I played 8 boards blindfolded against the best of the local players. The event took place in the same open stadium where the basketball tournaments had been so keenly fought only one night earlier! This was undoubtedly the most expertly-staged exhibition I have ever been privileged to give. Señor Luis E. Marquez was in charge of the preparations, and he had procured the services of Señor Torrenegra, one of Colombia's finest players, as teller.

Marquez had conceived the idea of making the exhibition pay for itself by selling the boards to local commercial houses. As a result, a large sign above each player identified his sponsor and served to advertise some product as well. I've often wondered why some enterprising American promoter hasn't seen fit to develop chess in the United States through some such scheme.

My table was placed upon a raised platform at center-court. I faced the players and spectators who filled the gallery in front of me, while my opponents and the large demonstration boards were behind me in full view of the audience. A spotlight played upon me, making the entire display one big blur of sound and faces. Both the teller and I had microphones which permitted everyone to hear everything either one of us said. At the end of 3 hours, I had won 4 and drawn 4 games in the most spectacular blindfold exhibition ever staged. The most interesting game was on Board No. 4:

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Garcia
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. P–QB4	P–K3
3. Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
4. B–Kt5	QKt–Q2
5. P–K3	P–B3
6. P–QR3	B–K2
7. Q–B2	O–O
8. R–Q1	R–K1
9. Kt–B3	P–QR3

Once again, I meet an amateur who does not realize that he must play for P–QB4 on the Black side of this opening. Best here is P–KR3, to be followed by P–QR3, PXP, P–QKt4, B–Kt2 and an eventual P–QB4.

10.	B–Q3	Kt–B1
11.	O–O	B–Q2

Black is beginning to lose control of his position. His B will remain useless on this square.

12.	**Kt–K5**	**Kt–R4**
13.	**BXB**	**QXB**
14.	**KR–K1**	**QR–B1**
15.	**P–B4**	**P–QKt4?**

Black is still ignorant of the need for P–QB4. He should have played 15 . . . . PXP; 16 BXP, P–QKt4; 17 B–R2, P–QB4.

16.	**P–QB5**	**P–KB4**
17.	**P–QKt4**	**Kt–Kt3**
18.	**P–Kt4!**	

Winning a P and opening up the game as well.

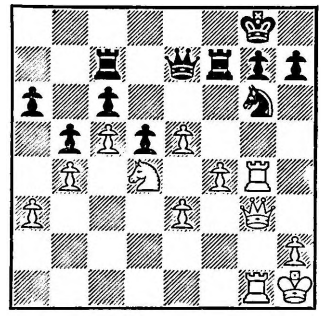
18.		**Kt–B3**

If 18 . . . . KtXKt; 19 BPXKt, PXP; 20 BXPch, K–R1; 21 B–Kt6.

19.	**PXP**	**PXP**
20.	**BXP**	**Kt–R5**
21.	**BXB**	**KtXB**
22.	**Q–KB2**	**Kt–B1**
23.	**K–R1**	**Kt(1)–Kt3**
24.	**R–KKt1**	**R–KB1**
25.	**R–Kt4**	**KtXKt**
26.	**QPXKt**	**Kt–Kt3**
27.	**Q–Kt3**	**Q–KB2**
28.	**Kt–K2**	**Q–K2**

White has been massing his forces for the attack on the K side, while Black has been preparing his defenses. White's passed Pawns, however, decide the day in short order.

29.	**Kt–Q4**	**R–QB2**
30.	**R–KKt1**	**R–B2**



31. **P–K6!**

White, having built up the attacking position he wanted, is now ready for action. Black's replies to this and the next few moves are forced.

31.		**R–B3**
32.	**P–B5**	**Kt–B1**
33.	**RXPch!**	**QXR**
34.	**QXR!**	Resigns

34 . . . . R–Kt3 would be met by 35 QXQch, RXQ; 36 RXRch, KXR; 37 P–K7, which wins the Kt and the game.

CHAPTER NINE

Touring the States

COMING TO A COUNTRY AS A CHESS-PLAYING VISITOR IS A FAR CRY from living in it as a happy citizen—a far cry indeed, and I'm more than happy that my voice has been able to carry so far. Americans, I am happy to say, have one invaluable asset which makes them the finest among the many friends I have found in this wide world. We in this country, when we like a person, have the enviable ability to drop all barriers and make that person feel as if an evening's acquaintance was a lifelong friendship.

I have toured this country for many years now, and have visited some sections annually. In fact, I probably have been to more places than an aspirant for the Presidential nomination! And, everywhere, I have found it possible to make and to hold friends. This is undoubtedly the great gain my new country has brought me—friends, and a home at last! To one and all: Thanks!

Many years have passed since my first day in New York. It was nice, being met at the station by reporters, having my picture taken, and then being rushed to Station WOR for an interview on a human-interest program. "How do you do it?" they asked, and laughed when I insisted I really couldn't understand it myself.

From the radio station, I was rushed to the Marshall Chess Club. This was indeed a reception! In fact, it was very much like being under fire for the first time in some titanic war. The audience and the quarters were the most impressive I had seen in years. This was one of the most famous clubs in the world, and the spectators included the cream of the American chess world. Dr. Emanuel Lasker and his charming wife were a familiar pair. The great Frank Marshall, a winning smile above his string tie, was a most gracious host, while Mrs. Marshall, hard-working as ever, had arranged a truly memorable first American exhibition.

Here were Kashdan and Horowitz and a dozen other masters, all joining in a proper welcome to one who knew some of them and was overjoyed to meet the others. How lucky I was that these great players were spectators rather than opponents!

It was November 6, 1938, my first day in America, and the 8-board exhibition contained two games which sufficed to make the debut a grand success.

ENGLISH OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Anderson
1. P–QB4	P–K4
2. Kt–QB3	Kt–KB3
3. Kt–B3	Kt–B3
4. P–Q4	PXP
5. KtXP	B–Kt5
6. B–Kt5	BXKtch

This is the best continuation. The doubled P's will constitute a lasting target for Black.

7. PXB	Kt–K4
8. P–K3	P–KR3
9. B–R4	Kt–Kt3
10. B–Kt3	O–O?

Kt–K5, exchanging B for Kt, was much better.

11. B–Q3	P–Q3
12. O–O	Kt–K4
13. P–B3	KtXB
14. QXKt	Kt–R4
15. P–K4	KtXB
16. PXKt	

Black has succeeded in exchanging B for Kt, but only after White has completed his development and has gained control of the center.

16.	Q–Kt4
17. P–B4	Q–QB4
18. P–B5!	

This prevents the Black B from becoming active, and also prepares for the attack against the K side.

18.	P–QKt3
19. R–B2?	B–Kt2
20. R–B4	QR–K1
21. R–K1	P–Q4!

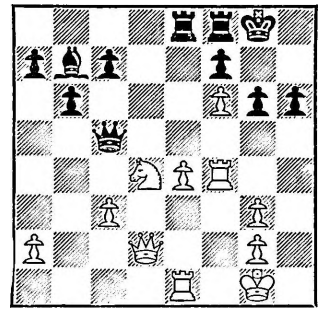
This sharp move enables Black to free his position a little. However, his K side remains open to attack.

22. BPXP	BXP
23. P–B6!	

Threatening 24 R–B5.

23.	P–Kt3
24. Q–Q2!	B–Kt2

The threat was still R–B5; now it succeeds!



25. R–B5! Resigns

White threatens the Queen and also mate by 26 QXRP and 27 Q–Kt7 mate.

TWO KNIGHTS DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	S. Zeitlin
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	Kt–B3
4. O–O	KtXP

White's 4th move, a departure from the standard lines, has the slight advantage of opening up the game quickly.

5. P–Q4	P–Q4
6. B–QKt5	PXP
7. KtXP	B–Q2
8. BXKt	PXB
9. P–QB4	B–K2
10. QKt–B3	Kt–B3?

Black really has nothing to fear. Better is 10 . . . . KtXKt; 11 PXKt, O–O; and White will have to work hard to develop any kind of attack. For example, 12 Q–B3, B–B3; 13 PXP, BXKt; 14 PXB, PXP; 15 QXP, B–K3; 16 Q–QB5, Q–Q3; 17 B–R3, QXQ; 18 BXQ would draw.

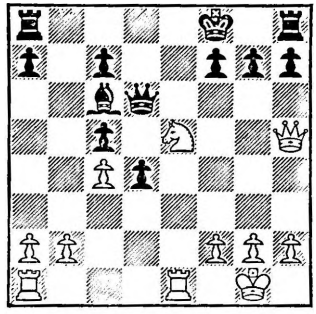
11. B–Kt5	P–B4
12. BXKt	BXB
13. R–K1ch	K–B1

Forced. If 13 . . . . B–K2, then 14 KtXQP, and the pinned B is lost.

14. Kt–B3	P–Q5
15. Kt–Q5	B–B3
16. KtXB	QXKt
17. Kt–K5	Q–Q3?

Best was B–K1, but Black prefers to keep his pieces in play.

18. Q–R5



18. P–Kt3

18 . . . . B–K1 was still called for, although White would then have regained his P by 19 Kt–Q3, with a strong game.

19. Q–R6ch	K–Kt1
20. KtXB	QXKt
21. R–K7	R–K1
22. QR–K1	RXR
23. RXR	Q–B3??

A fatal blunder, although Black is lost in any event:

(A) If 23 . . . . P–Q6; 24 Q–B4, P–B4; 25 Q–K5!

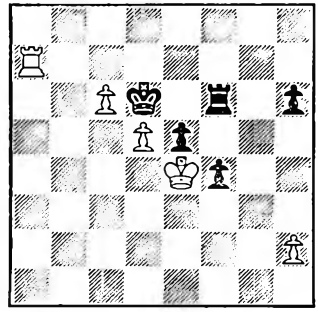
(B) If 23 . . . . P–Q6; 24 Q–B4, P–B3; 25 Q–R6, and mate to follow.

(C) If 23 . . . . P–Q6; 24 Q–B4, K–Kt2; 25 RXPch, K–Kt1; 26 R–B8ch, K–Kt2; 27 RXR, KXR; 28 Q–B8 mate.

So, perhaps Black had a reason for his 23rd move!

24. R–K8 mate

Several days after the Marshall exhibition, I was the guest of the Hungarian Chess Club of New York in an 8-board exhibition. During the little talk on the technique of blindfold play beforehand, I was asked whether a blindfold player could play a difficult ending as well as he does the relatively standardized openings. I answered that I hoped that the evening's play would give me an opportunity to demonstrate how well or how poorly I could manage an ending which called for the most precise play. As luck would have it, the opportunity arose in this position:



It was the turn of my opponent, Stefan, to move.

1. **R–B1**

If 1....P–B6, then 2 R–Q7ch, K–B4; 3 P–B7, R–B1; 4 R–Q8.

2.	**R–Q7ch**	**K–B4**
3.	**P–B7**	**R–B1**
4.	**P–Q6**	**K–B3**
5.	**R–Q8**	**K–Kt2**
6.	**K–Q5**	

Here 6 P–Q7, RXP (best); 7 R–Kt8ch wins, too. However, the text-move is more simple and neat.

6.		**P–B6**
7.	RXR	KXR
8.	**K–B6**	**P–B7**
9.	**P–Q7** mate	

Among the most interesting chess clubs in America is that of the Faculty Club of Columbia University. Here the professors of this famous institution meet to spend an occasional hour with chessmen and the game of the ages. I have played there several times, and always look forward to my next visit. December 8, 1938, was the date of my first appearance at the Faculty Club,

and this 8-board exhibition contained games which demonstrated the playing ability of the university staff. Here is one of them:

ENGLISH OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	La Mer
1. P–QB4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–QB3	P–K3
3. P–Q4	B–Kt5

The game is transposed into a Nimzovitch Defense.

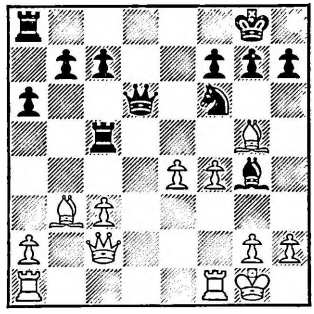
4. P–K3	P–Q4
5. Q–R4ch?!	

This is not exactly the move called for by the position. However, I feel that an exhibition against strong players demands an attempt to throw the opposition off by departing from the best-known lines of play. Every player knows that one weak move in the opening is not in itself enough to lose the game. In fact, by surprising an opponent, it can succeed where sound play will only meet an adequate defense.

5.	Kt–B3
6. Kt–B3	BXKtch
7. PXB	O–O
8. B–Q3	P–QR3
9. O–O	PXP
10. BXBP	B–Q2

Now Black threatens to win a piece by 11 . . . . P–QKt4.

11. Q–B2	R–K1
12. P–K4	P–K4
13. B–KKt5	B–Kt5
14. KtXP!	KtXKt
15. PXKt	RXP
16. P–B4	R–QB4
17. B–Kt3	Q–Q3?!



Black has carefully prepared a plan of attack; it fails because of the continuation available to White:

18. P–K5	Q–Kt3
19. PXKt!	RXBch

Black's original intention must have been 19 . . . . RXPch, but this would lose after 20 Q–B2!, when White would remain a piece ahead.

20. K–R1	R–Kt3
21. PXP	R–Q1
22. P–B5	RXP
23. QR–K1	Q–QB3
24. Q–K4	QXQ
25. RXQ	R–Kt4
26. P–KR3	BXBP
27. R–K5	R–Q7

Black cannot save his B.

28. KRXB	KRXP
29. R–K8ch	K–Kt2
30. RXPch	K–R3
31. R–K6ch	R–Kt3
32. RXRch	Resigns

The extra piece would make White's task easy.

At another board that evening, Ted Shedlevsky entered into a line in the Caro-Kann made popular during the Flohr-Botvinnik match.

CARO-KANN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Shedlevsky
1. P–K4	P–QB3
2. P–Q4	P–Q4
3. PXP	PXP
4. P–QB4	Kt–KB3
5. Kt–QB3	Kt–B3
6. B–KKt5	PXP

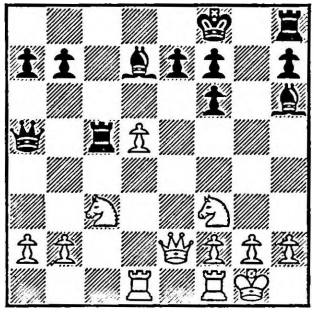
6 . . . . P–K3 is a weaker move which blocks the Black position.

7. P–Q5	Kt–K4
8. BXP	KtXB
9. Q–R4ch	B–Q2
10. QXKt	R–B1
11. Q–K2	Q–R4

The best move here is 11 . . . . P–QKt4!

12. R–Q1	R–B4
13. BXKt	KtPXB
14. Kt–B3	B–R3
15. O–O	K–B1

Castling would lose the KP.



16. KR–K1	Q–Q1
17. Kt–Q4	R–Kt1
18. Kt–K6ch!	

The element of surprise! Thanks to the Black Q's position, the sacrifice is only a temporary one.

18.	PXKt
19. PXP	R–K4
20. RXB	Q–Kt3

If 20 . . . . RXQ; 21 RXQch, K–Kt2; 22 RXRch, KXR; 23 RXR.

21. Q–Q1	QXKP
22. RXR	QXKR
23. R–Q8ch	K–Kt2

If 23 . . . . K–B2; 24 Q–Kt3ch wins.

24. Q–Kt4ch	Q–Kt4

If 24 . . . . B–Kt4; 25 RXRch, KXR; 26 P–KR4 wins a piece.

25. QXQch	BXQ
26. R–Q7	

White is willing to settle for a P!

26.	K–B2
27. RXKtP	R–QR1
28. P–KKt3	B–Q7
29. Kt–Q5	Resigns

Birmingham

The Queen's Gambit Declined has developed the reputation of leading to dull positional games. The King's Pawn openings, on the other hand, are popularly assumed to be ideal weapons for an attacking player. Neither of these descriptions seems correct to me. Brilliant games are not the result of a choice of openings; rather, they occur when there is some marked difference in the playing ability of the two opponents, or when one has in some way deviated from theoretically correct play. The play of a Morphy is spectacular because of his superiority over his opponents and because of his quick utilization of the tactical resources of a position. Every one of us, having similar advantages over any given opponent, can produce brilliancies. Here is an example of what can happen when an amateur hunts stray pawns, in a game played in Birmingham, Alabama, during my 1939 tour.

QUEEN'S GAMBIT DECLINED

	White	*Black*
	Koltanowski	Amateur
1.	P–Q4	P–Q4
2.	P–QB4	P–QB3
3.	P–K3	Kt–B3
4.	Kt–QB3	P–K3
5.	B–Q3	P–QR3
6.	Kt–B3	PXP
7.	BXBP	B–K2

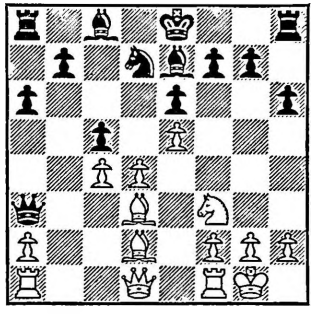
Once again, we see the failure to play for an early P–QB4. Best is 7....P–QKt4; 8....QKt–Q2; 9....P–B4.

8.	P–K4	P–KR3
9.	P–K5	Kt–Q4
10.	O–O	KtXKt
11.	PXKt	Q–R4?

Black begins his hunt. Best, of course, was to try to develop his Q side.

12.	B–Q2	Kt–Q2
13.	B–Q3	P–QB4
14.	P–B4	Q–R6?

Better is 14....Q–B2, when the Q would be available to assist in the development of the Q side. But Black is going to win a P instead of getting his pieces into play!



15.	Q–K2	PXP
16.	KtXP	KtXP?

Black wins his P, and leaves his undeveloped position ripe for White's attack.

17.	QXKt	QXB
18.	QXKtP	R—B1
19.	BXP	B—Q2
20.	QR—Q1	QXP
21.	R—QB1	Q—Q4
22.	KR—Q1	R—B1

Now Black gets a nasty surprise.

23.	Kt—B6!	Q—KB4

If 23....QXRch; 24 RXQ, RXKt; 25 Q—R7 wins another exchange.

24.	KtXB	KXKt
25.	B—Kt5ch	K—K1
26.	RXRch	BXR
27.	R—Q8 mate	

Milwaukee

I spent the summer of 1940 as chess instructor for the Milwaukee playgrounds. This truly fortunate job introduced me to thousands of American youngsters, some of whom have since rewarded me by their play in the national junior tournaments. Any chess player can understand the joy of teaching the game to eager young minds. There is nothing to compare with the inner glow caused by the quickness with which these boys and girls grasp the ideas of the game.

I soon discovered that four days of instruction, perhaps preceded by several games of baseball or handball to show the youngsters that chess was not necessarily a "sissy game," were enough to leave them with a fair foundation for their future chess development. Any healthy youngster, I have discovered, will play chess if his interest has been aroused. A simultaneous blindfold exhibition, I found, served to clinch the points I had made. This, then, became the program for the fifth day at each playground.

I was quite certain that I wouldn't lose a single game to such opposition. In fact, I was so sure of this that I offered a new bicycle to anyone who was able to score as much as a draw against me in one of the Friday displays. A foolish offer, indeed! Who knew what strange error I might commit, or what blossoming genius I might uncover? However, it wasn't until I met disaster in the form of a thirteen-year-old schoolgirl, one of the four opponents in a blindfold exhibition at the Columbia Playground

in July, that I decided to withdraw my bicycle offer. Yes, this was one of the hottest and coldest days I have ever known!

IRREGULAR OPENING

White	*Black*
	Willeen
Koltanowski	McHenry
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. B–B4	P–Q3
3. Q–B3	

After all, this was only a girl. Let's get it over with as soon as possible. The Scholar's Mate works so often against the youngsters!

3.	Q–B3

To my surprise, she plays the move which most effectively refutes my simple attack.

4. P–Q3	QXQ
5. KtXQ	B–Kt5
6. B–K3	BXKt

Had I foreseen the course the game is taking, I would have adopted different tactics. However, I feel safe here, expecting a piece to drop into my hands at any moment, or at least some blunder which will let me snatch some small material advantage from my young adversary.

7. PXB	Kt–Q2
8. Kt–B3	Kt–Kt3
9. O–O–O?	

I continue confident, and Black continues to play somewhat more strongly than someone who had learned the moves earlier this week has any right to do. Better was 9 B–Kt3.

9.	KtXB
10. PXKt	Kt–B3
11. Kt–Q5	

Forced, for Black threatens to obtain a dominating position with Kt–R4.

11.	KtXKt
12. BPXKt	P–QB4

Since I had refrained from teaching them the en-passant rule, I could not answer this move with PXP e.p.

13. P–QB3	P–QKt4

She continues to play well! Where was I to get a bicycle, anyway?

14. P–QKt4	P–B5
15. K–Kt2	P–QR4
16. P–QR3	P–R5

Now Willeen has succeeded in blocking the Q side. If she can manage to repeat on the K side she'll get her draw–and her bicycle!

17. KR–Kt1	P–Kt3
18. P–B4	P–B3
19. P–KR4	K–B2
20. P–R5	KtPXP?

Experience begins to tell. The P sacrifice is only temporary, and should have been refused by Black.

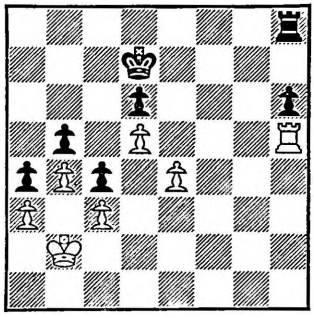
21. PXP	BPXP
22. P–B4	B–R3!

The girl plays like a veteran!

23.	QR–KB1	BXP
24.	BXB	PXB
25.	RXPch	K–K2
26.	R–Kt7ch	K–K1
27.	R–B6	R–Q1
28.	R–R6	R–Q2
29.	RXR	KXR

Now for the invasion by the White Rook.

30.	RXRP	P–R3!!



If Capablanca had been behind the girl's shoulder I could not have felt worse. With this move, she has prevented me from playing R–R6, a move which would have won. Now Black can draw with careful play.

31.	K–B2	K–K2
32.	K–Q2	K–Q2
33.	K–K3	K–K2
34.	K–Q4	K–Q2
35.	P–K5	

My last hope!

35.		R–R2!

Again, well played. After 36 PXP, KXP; Black prevents the entry of the White K, which now threatens invasion via B5.

36.	K–K4	K–K2
37.	P–K6	R–R1
38.	K–B5	

At last! I know I should have been satisfied with a draw—but how could I?

38.		R–B1ch
39.	K–Kt6	R–B6
40.	KXP	RXP
41.	R–B5	RXP
42.	R–B7ch	K–K1
43.	R–Q7	P–B6

Second best. 43 . . . . R–K6 would have made White most unhappy. For example, 43 . . . . R–K6; 44 RXP, P–R6; 45 R–R6, R–K4; 46 RXP, RXP; and Black's position is to be preferred.

44.	RXP	P–B7
45.	R–B6	R–R6ch
46.	K–Kt6	R–R7
47.	P–Q6	K–Q1
48.	K–B6?	

No sooner had I announced the move than I perceived the win by 48 P–K7ch, K–Q2; 49 R–B8!

48.		R–R3ch
49.	K–K5	R–R7
50.	P–Q7	K–K2
51.	R–B8	R–Q7??

The fatal blunder at last. Believe me, if I had had a bicycle, I would have given it to Willeen a dozen moves earlier. Who ever heard of a novice playing so well? By the way, with 51 . . . . R–K7ch; 52 K–KB5, R–B7ch; 53 K–Kt4, R–Q7; the game remains a draw.

52.	R–K8 mate	

PITTSBURGH

You check into a downtown hotel in the nation's steel center, wash and shave and get into clean clothes, and then you look for the Downtown YMCA. Sometimes, of course, you stop to eat something, but any chess player who visits Pittsburgh makes a bee-line for the Downtown "Y" Chess Club as soon as he can. Why not eat with this crowd of really fine fellows, if you want to eat after the chess fever of the "Y" building takes hold of you?

Bill Byland, quiet and capable, sets the tone at the "Y." Joe Firestone, one of America's biggest chess players, rotund and happy, is always there behind a big cigar. Cherington—"Cherry" to Pennsylvania's chess fans—cracks the best jokes and plays the most unpredictable game in America. Bob Reel is liable to drop in any time to demonstrate some new line he has just uncovered. "Phlegmatic" Wagner sits there waiting for some opponent who mistakes his quiet attitude for the timidity of a novice and, after playing a game, can only walk away shaking his head. I first played Wagner on October 18, 1940, and was fortunate in seeing him walk away after a game which gave him something to shake his head about.

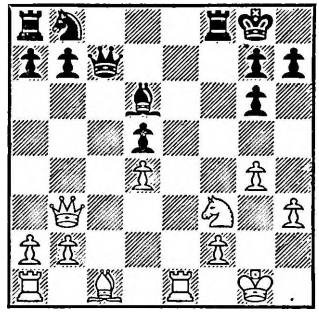
PETROFF DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Wagner
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
3. KtXP	P–Q3
4. Kt–KB3	KtXP
5. P–Q4	P–Q4
6. B–Q3	B–Q3
7. O–O	O–O
8. P–B4	P–QB3
9. Kt–B3	Kt–B3
10. R–K1	B–KKt5
11. P–KR3	B–R4
12. P–KKt4	B–Kt3
13. BXB	BPXB?

The first slip. Like most strong players, Wagner is well aware of the maxim, "Capture toward the center," but is temporarily blinded by the potential power of the open B file.

14. PXP	KtXP
15. KtXKt	PXKt
16. Q–Kt3	Q–B2

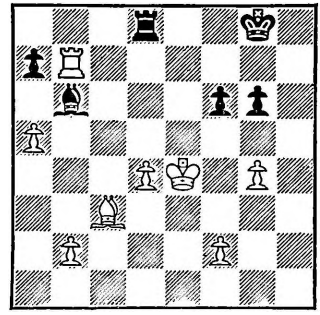
16....K–R1 would have allowed an interesting win by 17 QXKtP, RXKt; 18 QXR, Q–R5; 19 R–K8ch, B–B1; 20 B–K3.



17.	QXPch	K–R1
18.	B–Q2	Kt–B3
19.	Kt–Kt5	Kt–Q1
20.	QR–B1	Q–Q2
21.	K–Kt2	Kt–B2
22.	KtXKtch	QXKt
23.	QXQ	RXQ
24.	R–K6	R–B3
25.	QR–K1	QR–KB1
26.	RXR	PXR
27.	R–K6	B–B2
28.	R–K7	B–Kt3
29.	B–B3	R–Q1

Black is lost. After the exchange of Bishops on Q5 he would lose his QRP, remaining two P's behind.

30.	RXKtP	R–Q4
31.	P–QR4	P–KR4
32.	K–B3	PXPch
33.	PXP	K–Kt1
34.	K–K4	R–Q1
35.	P–R5	



Clinching the win. Three passed P's will be too much.

35.		R–K1ch
36.	K–B3	B–Q1
37.	RXRP	Resigns

I have played against Joe Firestone on several occasions. In his youth, Joe was one of Hungary's finest players, and to this day remains one of Pittsburgh's most dangerous experts. Our last encounter, in an 8-board exhibition on October 21, 1946, saw him improvising an adequate defense to a premature attack and then allowing White's pieces to invade his K side.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Firestone
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. P–QB4	P–KKt3
3. Kt–QB3	B–Kt2
4. P–K4	P–Q3
5. P–KB3	O–O
6. B–K3	QKt–Q2
7. Q–Q2	P–B3
8. B–R6	

White's plan is simplicity itself —the inauguration of an immediate attack against the Black K position. Black, on the other hand,

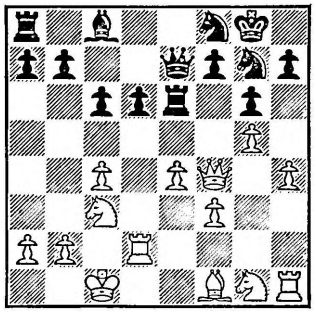
will only have to defend himself, for such early attacks rarely succeed against cool-headed play.

8.		Kt–K1
9.	BXB	KtXB
10.	Q–R6	R–K1
11.	P–KKt4	Kt–B1
12.	P–KR4	P–K4

Well played. Counter-attack in the center is the ideal riposte to premature lunges on the K side.

13.	O–O–O	PXP
14.	RXP	Kt(2)–K3
15.	R–Q2	Kt–Kt2
16.	Q–B4	R–K3
17.	P–Kt5	Q–K2

White's attack has petered out, and Black threatens to counter on the Q side. Thus, White must try to complicate matters.



18.	P–B5!	P–Q4!

Better than 18 . . . . PXP; 19 B–B4, after which White's pieces would rapidly come into play.

19.	KKt-K2	QXBP
20.	PXP	PXP
21.	RXP	Q–K2
22.	R–Q2	R–QB3
23.	Kt–Q4	R–B4
24.	Kt–B2!	

White has fortified his exposed K position, and can now proceed to another attempt at the K position of his opponent.

24.		B–B4
25.	B–Q3	Kt–R4
26.	Q–R2	QR–B1
27.	R–K1	Q–Q2?
28.	B–K4	Q–B2
29.	QXQ	R(1)XQ
30.	BXB	RXB
31.	R–Q8!	Kt–Kt2

If 31 . . . . K–Kt2; 32 R(1)–K8, Kt–K3; 33 R–Kt8 mate.

32.	Kt–Q5!	Resigns

If 32 . . . . Kt–K3; 33 RXKt (K6), PXR; 34 KtXR.

If 32 . . . . R–Q2; 33 RXR, KtXR; 34 Kt–K7ch and 35 KtXR.

PROVIDENCE

It is usually the less proficient players who are most amazed by the achievements and abilities of a blindfold chess player. In order to satisfy the curiosity of such players, and also to convince them that it can be done, I generally play two or three blindfold games at the conclusion of a simultaneous exhibition. The results are often amusing. The skeptical novices volunteer

to oppose me, I make every effort to defeat them quickly, and they generally succumb to a short and occasionally sound opening attack. One such game occurred in a display at Providence, Rhode Island, in 1940.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Mr. "X"
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–KB3	P–KKt3
3. P–KKt3	B–Kt2
4. B–Kt2	P–Kt3

This double fianchetto has been demonstrated to be unsound, but remains a favorite of beginners.

5. O–O	B–Kt2
6. P–B4	O–O
7. Kt–B3	P–Q4
8. Kt–K5	

The ease with which White dominates the center supplies proof of the inadequacy of Black's opening play.

8.	P–K3
9. B–Kt5	P–KR3
10. BXKt	BXB
11. PXP	PXP
12. Q–Q3	K–Kt2?

Black misses a chance to free his position by some such line as 12 . . . . BXKt; 13 PXB, P–QB3; 14 P–K6, P–KB4!; 15 Q–K3, Q–K2; 16 QXRP, QXKP.

13. P–B4	B–K2
14. P–B5	

Black was threatening 14 . . . . P–KB4. On with the attack!

14.	P–KKt4
15. P–B6ch?!	

Good? Who knows? A blindfold player often has to rely upon some sixth sense which insists upon moves like this one. All that I hoped was that this move would give me chances to attack, and that was a temptation I could not resist.

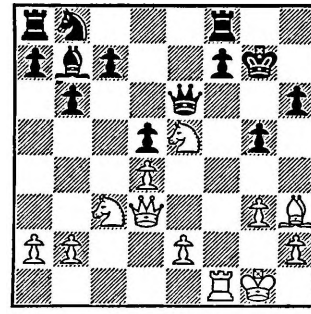
15.	BXP
16. RXB?!	

Having said "A", White must now say the whole alphabet—or almost all of it!

16.	QXR

If 16 . . . . KXR; 17 R–B1ch, K–K2(best); 18 Q–R7 with good possibilities.

17. R–B1	Q–K3
18. B–R3	



18.	QXB??

And here the psychology of the amateur shows itself. My opponent must have assumed that my 18th move was a blunder, and

didn't even consider 18.... P–KB4, which, by returning the exchange, would have left him with a fair game.

19. RXBPch Resigns

Now he sees it. Mate in two will follow after 19.... RXR; 20 Q–Kt6ch, K–R1(K–B1; 21 QXR mate); 21 KtXR mate. And so the sixth sense triumphed where wisdom would have failed to attack! But then, the undeveloped Black Q side, which permitted these sacrifices, made them necessary. The inaccuracies of the novice must be exploited!

Sacramento

Even as the novice invites attack, so the experienced player offers opportunities for simple combinations. It may seem paradoxical that a strong player should blunder in a good position. The sad fact is, however, that the most competent opponents are most often guilty of that most inexcusable of chess crimes—underrating the opposition! They are the ones who permit simple wins in the most even positions. Perhaps the cause of this common failing lies in the ease with which they are able to obtain equality in the opening. They enter upon the middle-game certain that their ability will enable them to maintain their good games. The following game, played November 13, 1941, serves to illustrate this point.

GIUOCO PIANO

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Meyers
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	Kt–B3
4. O–O	B–K2

4....KtXP is quite playable here. Black secures easy equality after 5 B–Q5, Kt–B3; 6 BXKt, QPXB; 7 KtXP, B–Q3; 8 P–Q4, O–O.

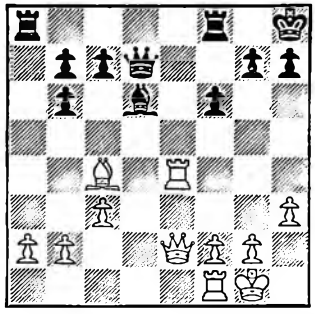
5. P–Q3	O–O
6. B–K3	P–Q4
7. PXP	KtXP
8. QKt–Q2	B–KKt5
9. P–QB3	Kt–Kt3
10. BXKt	RPXB
11. Q–K2	K–R1
12. P–KR3	BXKt

Black has achieved equality with little trouble. Now his troubles begin as he neglects to retain control of the center squares.

13. KtXB	P–B3
14. QR–Q1	B–Q3
15. P–Q4	PXP
16. KtXP	KtXKt
17. RXKt	Q–K1?

A waste of time. Better is 17 ....Q–Q2.

18. R–K4	Q–Q2



19. **R–KR4** **QR–K1??**

There it is! The game is over now. How can one explain Black's last move? It can only be another case of underrating—the refusal to admit to oneself that an opponent who has not developed a considerable superiority in position can have a mating attack on the board.

20. **RXRPch** **KXR**
21. **Q–R5** mate

Omaha

Delmar Saxton is one of Omaha's finest players, a man whose aggressive style is perfectly suited for either side of any gambit. Accordingly, when I faced him in a 3-board blindfold exhibition following a simultaneous display on October 20, 1940, I snatched at the opportunity to play a Wing Gambit. Strangely, Saxton, like so many other experts, lost himself in the glories of his own attack and permitted a mate which is an echo of the one in the last game. Underrating?

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Saxton
1. **P–K4**	**P–QB4**
2. **P–QKt4**	**PXP**
3. **P–QR3**	**P–Q4!**
4. **P–K5**	**Kt–QB3**
5. **P–Q4**	**P–K3**
6. **PXP**	**KtXKtP**
7. **P–QB3**	**Kt–QB3**

Everything proceeds according to plan. White will play Kt–K2 and advance the KBP. Black will hold the K side and later attempt an attack on the Q side.

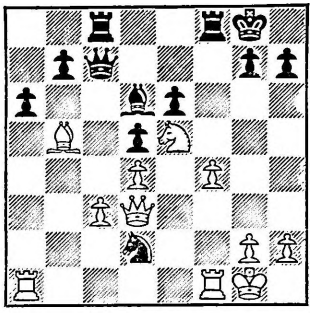
8. **B–Q3** **Q–B2**
9. **Kt–K2** **P–QR3**
10. **O–O** **P–B4**
11. **PXP e.p.** **KtXBP**
12. **P–KB4** **B–Q3**
13. **Kt–Q2** **O–O**
14. **Kt–B3** **B–Q2**
15. **Kt–K5** **QR–B1**

Black increases the pressure on the Q side while awaiting the White attack against the K side.

16. **B–Q2** **Kt–K2**
17. **Kt–Kt3** **Kt–B4**
18. **Q–B3** **KtXKt**
19. **QXKt** **B–Kt4?!**

Black has something up his sleeve, and White lets it slip out!

20. **BXB** **Kt–K5!**
21. **Q–Q3** **KtXB**



22. B–Q7!

This complicates matters for Black. If 22 QXKt, PXB; and Black will play for P–Kt5 and the crumbling of the White center. Now, if 22 . . . . BXKt; 23 BXPch, K–R1; 24 BPXB, RXRch; 25 RXR, KtXR; 26 BXR, QXB; 27 QXKt or KXKt, and the ending should be drawn. But Black, sensing an attack, takes what he can and . . . .

22.		KtXR
23.	BXPch	K–R1
24.	Kt–Kt6ch!	

Surprise!

24.		PXKt
25.	Q–R3 mate!	

VENTNOR

During the past decades, Ventnor, New Jersey, has become one of the most important centers of chess activity in the United States. This suburb of Atlantic City, blessed by the presence of Dick Wayne, one of the finest tournament directors in the world, has been the scene of a series of tournaments which have discovered more chess talent than any other regional event in the nation's history. Among the finer chess brains unearthed by Wayne's activities is Edgar T. McCormick, a young expert who has always impressed me as a deep and original thinker. I first played him in an 8-board exhibition on December 15, 1940, and the resulting game was undoubtedly one of the hardest-fought struggles I have ever experienced.

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	McCormick
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–B3
5. P–Q4	BXP
6. KtXB	KtXKt
7. P–B4	P–Q3
8. P–B3	B–Kt5?

Black must return to QB3 with his Kt. Now White will be able to trap the Black B on Kt5.

9.	Q–Q2	Kt–B3

If 9 . . . . KtXKP; 10 Q–K3, Kt–B7; 11 QXKt, KtXR; 12 BXPch! wins.

10.	P–B5	Q–Q2
11.	Q–K1	

The B is trapped; it remains to be seen what compensation Black can obtain for it.

11.		O–O–O
12.	P–KR3	Kt–QR4
13.	B–Q3	Q–R5
14.	PXB	KtXKtP

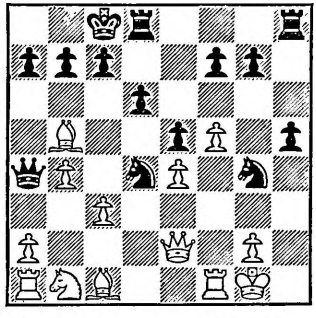
Black now threatens Kt–Kt6, which can be met by B–B2 or Q–Q1. However, White cannot attempt an attack until this potential threat is removed. Thus:

15.	P–Kt4	Kt–QB3
16.	Q–K2!	

It looks like a quick, easy win at this point. I am a piece ahead (for two P's), and am threatening the Kt on Kt5 as well as the win of the Q by B–Kt5. At least, that's the way it looks!

16.		P–KR4
17.	B–QKt5	Kt–Q5!

Black finds the only way of saving his Queen!



18.	PXKt	QXKtP
19.	Q–Kt2	QXQPch
20.	QXQ	PXQ
21.	B–K2	KR–K1
22.	BXKt	PXB
23.	R–K1	

White has two pieces against four P's. This would ordinarily assure an easy win, but McCormick proves unusually tenacious.

23.		R–K4
24.	B–B4	R–B4
25.	Kt–Q2	R–K1
26.	KR–QB1	K–Q2
27.	RXR	

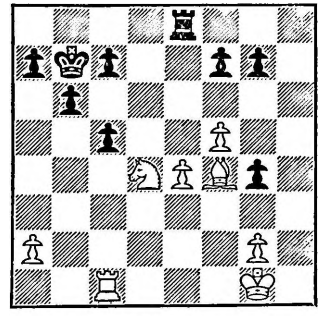
Black will have four potential passed P's on the Q side and an active K. White's plan is to effect as many exchanges as possible, so that his advantage in material can make itself felt.

27.		PXR
28.	R–QB1	K–B3
29.	Kt–Kt3	P–QKt3

Black wisely holds on to his P's. After 29 . . . . RXP; 30 KtXP, White should have an easy time of it.

30.	KtXPch	K–Kt2

What is White to do now?



31. Kt–K6!?

Since I can see no way of breaking through the Black defenses by passive means, I decide on this move, which will give me a strong KP.

31.		PXKt
32.	PXP	RXP
33.	P–K5	K–B3
34.	K–B2	K–Q4
35.	K–K3	P–QKt4

The Black P's suddenly threaten to become active.

36.	R–Q1ch	K–B3

If 36....K–B5, then 37 K–K4 allows the White K to penetrate.

37.	K–K4	P–Kt3
38.	R–Q8	P–Kt5
39.	K–Q3	P–R4
40.	K–B4	P–Kt4!

Well played. Now the Black R will make an attempt to break into the rear ranks of the White position.

41.	B–Kt3	R–R3
42.	R–Q5	R–R8
43.	RXPch	K–Kt3
44.	R–Q5	R–B8ch
45.	K–Q4	P–R5!

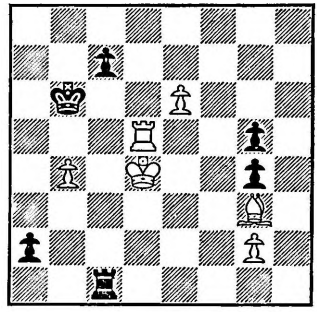
Better than exchanging R's by R–Q8ch, for White's K would then be able to stop the Black P's.

46.	P–K6	P–Kt6
47.	PXP	P–R6!

In order to Queen, with check.

48.		P–R7

If 48....R–Q8ch; 49 K–K4, RXR; 50 KXR, P–R7; 51 B–K5 wins.



49.	R–R5	P–R8(Q)ch
50.	RXQ	RXR
51.	P–K7	R–R1
52.	K–Q5	R–K1
53.	K–K6	K–B3
54.	P–Kt5ch!	KXP

White's 54th move wins the game, since Black will be unable to hold the opposition in the moves to follow.

55.	K–Q7	RXPch
56.	KXR	P–B4
57.	K–B6	P–B5
58.	KXP	Resigns

The White B will move to B4, holding the Black P, while the White K will capture the P on Kt4, then shepherd the White P down the board to its Queening square.

This is chess! A game like this never fails to prove to me anew that the United States has produced a new generation of truly talented chess masters.

Hazleton

Hazleton is a city of some 50,000 people in the midst of Pennsylvania's most active mining region. Its small but active chess club, meeting weekly at the YMCA or at the home of genial inventor-businessman Art Fey, has been host to many visiting masters, and was once the organizing group for a successful state tournament.

Pennsylvania, like California, contains a large number of towns and cities which are so close to one another that a citizen of one is quite at home in a half-dozen others. Any exhibition in a Pennsylvania city is certain to attract players from the entire region. One never knows who his opponents are likely to be when he schedules a visit to Harrisburg, or Allentown, or Hazleton, or Lancaster. Thus, the exhibitions are never dull, and never marred by the refusal of the strongest players to take a board. In Pennsylvania, they seek you out!

My 1941 exhibition in Hazleton was no exception. Among the unexpected players present was William H. Steckel, a talented expert who welcomes an opportunity to leave well-trodden opening lines in the search for a real fighting game. Bill took a board in the 4-board blindfold display which closed the evening, and produced a game which would have done credit to any Masters' tournament.

ALBIN COUNTER GAMBIT

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Steckel
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. P–QB4	P–K4

Black aims at playing P–Q5, which will prevent White from developing his Kt on its natural square, QB3. White can hardly decline the sacrifice of the KP, for Black will then succeed in developing his pieces quickly. The best course is to accept the P and make Black compromise his position in the attempt to regain it. As Weaver Adams has demonstrated on many occasions, the Albin is yet to be proven unsound.

3. PXKP	P–Q5
4. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
5. P–QR3	B–KKt5

This would also have been the reply to 5 P–KKt3, which is considered best today.

6. QKt–Q2	Q–Q2

Something new. The usual move is 6 . . . . Q–K2, with O–O–O to follow.

7. P–QKt4

This move develops the White QB, and threatens P–Kt5 to win Black's strong QP.

7. R–Q1

White's 7th move has forced a change in Black's plan. 7.... O–O–O would be too dangerous because of 8 P–Kt5 and either the advance of the QRP or the immediate Q–R4.

8. B–Kt2 KKt–K2
9. P–Kt5 Kt–R4
10. Q–R4

Attack and defense!

10. P–QKt3
11. KtXP Kt–B4
12. P–K3 B–B4

Black's position is well developed, but he is two P's down!

13. Kt(2)–B3 O–O
14. P–KR3 BXKt(B6)
15. KtXB Kt–R5

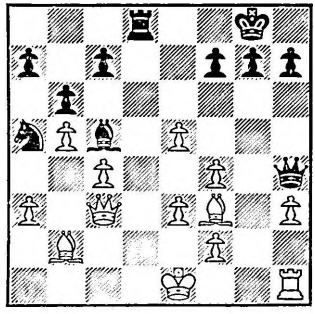
Daring, for White cannot capture this Kt because of Q–Q7 mate!

16. R–Q1 KtXKtch
17. PXKt Q–B4
18. B–K2 RXRch
19. QXR Q–Kt4
20. P–B4 Q–K2?

20....Q–R5 would have retained the pressure, because of the necessity of meeting the threat of BXKP! Black would then have had time to play R–Q1, with gain of tempo.

21. Q–Q3 R–Q1
22. Q–B3 Q–R5
23. B–B3

Aiming for B–Q5, which would close the open file and end Black's chances.



23. KtXP?

Desperation. Better would have been 23....BXKP; 24 QXB, KtXP; 25 Q–B3, KtXB; 26 QXKt, QXP(5), when Black might have had some slight drawing chances.

24. QXKt BXKP
25. Q–K2 BXP(B5)
26. B–B3

Black's attack is over. White's last move has prevented R–Q7, and now it is White who launches an attack.

26. Q–R3
27. B–B6 P–QR3
28. R–Kt1 PXP?

Black's position is sad to behold. His best move here was P–KKt3, which would have immobilized his Q.

29.	**P–K6**	**QXKP**
30.	**QXQ**	**PXQ**
31.	**RXPch**	

And now the classical tale of the naughty Rook which scourged the 7th rank.

31.		**K–B1**
32.	**RXRP**	**R–Q6**
33.	**B–Kt4ch**	**K–Kt1**
34.	**R–K7**	**RXKRP**
35.	**RXKP**	**K–B2**
36.	**R–K4**	**B–Kt4**
37.	**R–K5**	**B–B3**
38.	**RXP**	**K–K3**
39.	**R–Q5**	**B–Kt7**
40.	**R–Q2**	Resigns

White threatens B–Q7ch or B–Q5ch.

WAYNESBORO

I trust that I haven't given the impression that every Pennsylvania exhibition is marked by the presence of uniformly powerful opposition. The Keystone State has its full share of amateurs. I remember one game played in my customary three-board epilogue which saw my opponent breaking every rule in the opening and succumbing to an attack which could not have been easier had I been playing both sides of the board. Here is a lesson on how *not* to play the Black side of a QP opening!

QUEEN'S PAWN

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Webb
1. **P–Q4**	**P–Q4**
2. **Kt–KB3**	**Kt–KB3**
3. **P–K3**	**B–B4**
4. **P–B4**	**P–B3**
5. **Q–Kt3**	**Q–Q2?**

The Black Q on this square will be subjected to attack by either B–QKt5 or by Kt–K5. Better was Q–B1, or even P–QKt3.

6.	**Kt–B3**	**P–QKt3??**

It is strange that Black's game should be lost after only six moves! The correct move, or at least a better one, was P–K3.

7.	**PXP**	**KtXP**

If 7 . . . . PXP; 8 B–Kt5, Kt–B3; 9 Kt–K5 wins a piece.

8.	**KtXKt**	**QXKt**

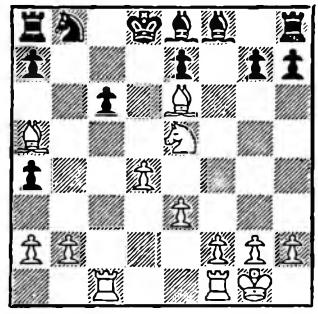
Black has no alternative. And now the failure to play 6 . . . . P–K3 results in quick punishment.

9.	**B–B4**	**Q–Q2**
10.	**BXPch**	**K–Q1**
11.	**Kt–K5**	**Q–B1**
12.	**B–B4**	**B–Kt3**
13.	**B–K6**	**Q–R3**
14.	**B–Q2**	**P–Kt4**
15.	**R–QB1**	**B–K1**
16.	**O–O**	**Q–R5??**

Black is so far behind in development that he seeks an exchange of Queens in order to lesson the pressure. But he overlooks

the continuation which the blindfold player perceives at once.

17. QXQ PXQ
18. B–R5 mate



New Orleans

Anyone who has ever played in a chess tournament is an authority on the importance of luck in chess. Every blunder is a stroke of good or bad luck, depending upon whether you or your opponent is the blunderer. Luck is an especially potent factor in simultaneous exhibitions, where it so often happens that a player having a superior position suddenly crumbles and becomes a duffer with a lost game.

Luck is also a factor in blindfold exhibitions. With eight boards engaged at the same time, each player usually has enough time to find as good a move as he'll ever see. However, every now and then I play a game in which I develop a lost position, get ready to resign, decide to play another move or two, and then find that my opponent has achieved the miracle of destroying his position. Now, please don't accuse me of the crime I so deeply abhor in others, of playing on and on in hopes of a blunder! It's just that the blindfold player seems inordinately lucky. Here's the sort of thing that happens, in a game played in an 8-board display in December, 1941.

QUEEN'S PAWN

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	A. Lockett, Jr.
1. P–Q4	P–K3
2. P–QB4	P–QKt3
3. P–K4	B–Kt2
4. Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
5. B–Q3	P–KB4
6. PXP??	

No sooner had I announced my move than I saw what I had done. Every other time I had played the White side of this position I had continued with Q–K2 or Q–B2. But now my turn to blunder had come!

6.		B X P

Time for White to resign! You simply don't give one of New Orleans' best players the advantage of a R in the opening. But then, what sort of a champion is it who resigns after only six moves? Let's play on for four or five moves. By that time the other games will have assumed a definite character, and a gracious resignation will be followed by an announced win on another board.

7.	Q–R5ch	K–B1
8.	KKt–K2	B X R
9.	Kt–B4	Kt–KB3
10.	Q–R4	K–Kt1
11.	Q–R3	B X Ktch
12.	P X B	B–K5
13.	B X B	Kt X B
14.	P X P	Q–K2?

On 14.... Kt–QB3, I would probably have resigned. But now I suddenly see a ray of hope!

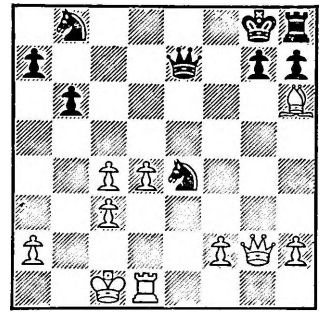
15.	Q–Kt2	

At least I'll regain a piece. Then, considering the poorly-developed Black position, the position should hold at least a draw!

15.		P–Q4?
16.	Kt X P	Q X P
17.	Kt X BP	Q–QB3
18.	Kt X R	

Now I'm only a piece behind. The game is still lost, but there is just a little play left.

18.		Q X Kt
19.	B–R6	Q–Kt2
20.	O–O–O	Q–K2



Black should have tried 20.... Kt–Q3 and 21.... Q–KB2. Instead, he looks for a mate.

21.	R–K1	Q–R6ch?

And now Black loses! He should have tried 21.... Q–B3; 22 Q X Kt, P X B.

22.	K–Kt1	Kt X Pch
23.	K–B2	Resigns

If 23.... P–Kt3; 24 Q–B3, and White will mate in a few moves. Lucky? I'm the luckiest chess player in the world!!

Tampa

Florida, under the impetus of the Miami and Tampa Chess Clubs, is rapidly becoming one of America's future chess centers. Although the state has not as yet produced any first-rate masters, I venture to predict that their arrival is certain in the near

future. My first visit to this Southern vacationland took place on December 8, 1941, and the best among the blindfold games played that evening allowed me to demonstrate that a gambit, when it succeeds, will produce fireworks even at the end of a long game!

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Solomon
1. P–K4	P–QB4
2. P–QKt4	PXP
3. P–QR3	P–Q4

Black plays the best defense.

4. P–K5	Kt–QB3
5. P–Q4	P–K3
6. PXP	BXPch
7. P–B3	B–K2
8. B–Q3	

In return for the P, White has greater control of space and an easy development for his pieces.

8.	B–Q2
9. Kt–K2	

The maneuvers of this Kt will be an important feature of the game. Watch it!

9.	P–KB3

Black realizes that his position is cramped, and makes this attempt to gain more space. Although he will succeed in ridding himself of the annoying White KP, his own backward KP will be a target requiring defense by one or more pieces. In addition, White will be able to post a Kt at K5, which becomes the strong-point of the White position.

10. PXP	KtXKBP
11. P–KB4	

This move prevents 11 . . . . P–K4, and firmly establishes White's control of the strong-point, K5.

11.	O–O
12. O–O	Q–K1
13. Kt–Q2	Kt–KKt5?

A waste of time, as the Kt will be forced to return to KB3. Better would have been P–QR3, with the idea of advancing the Q side P's (P–QR3, P–QKt4, P–Kt5, etc.) in order to prevent White from concentrating his efforts on the K side. But Black plays without any constructive plan.

14. Kt–B3	B–Q3
15. P–R3	Kt–B3
16. Kt–K5	Q–R4?

Black should look for some action on the Q side! As he plays it, the sortie by the Q is quickly repulsed.

17. Q–K1	QR–Q1
18. Kt–Kt3	Q–K1

18 . . . . Q–R5 would have been much too dangerous. For example, 19 Kt–B3, Q–R3; 20 P–B5, BXKt; 21 QXB, Q–R4; 22 PXP, BXP; 23 Kt–Kt5, B–Q2; 24 B–R3, KR–K1; 25 RXKt, PXR; 26 Kt–K6ch, K–B2; 27 Q–Kt7ch,

KXKt; 28 P–Kt4, Q–R5; 29 B–B5 mate.

19.	R–R2	P–QR3
20.	R–K2!	

Putting additional pressure upon Black's two weaknesses: the backward KP and the cramped K side.

20.		P–KKt3!

Strangely, this move protects the KP! Should White now play KtXB, Black will continue with 21....QXKt; 22 RXP, Kt–K5!; 23 BXKt, QXR and White cannot play 24 BXRPch to win the Q.

21.	KtXB	QXKt
22.	Kt–R1!	

Black's K side is ripe for attack, and this Kt is on the way! Thus, Kt–R1 makes way for the exit of the White Q, after which the Kt will be able to return to the scene of action.

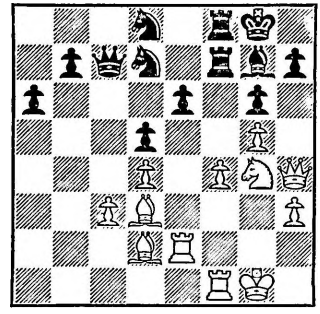
22.		QR–K1
23.	Q–R4	Kt–Q1
24.	P–KKt4	Q–QB2
25.	B–Q2	

Black was attacking the QBP, and White demonstrates his clear grasp of the position by protecting it.

25.		R–KB2
26.	Q–R6	B–B1
27.	Q–R4	B–Kt2
28.	P–Kt5!	

This move completes the strangle-hold on the Black K position.

28.		Kt–Q2
29.	Kt–B2	R(K1)–KB1
30.	Kt–Kt4	Q–Q3

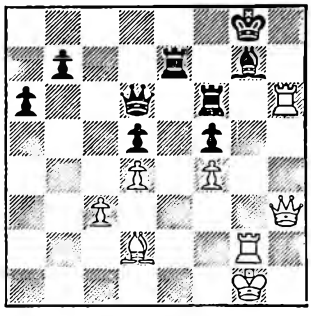


31.	R(B1)–B2	Kt–QB3
32.	Q–Kt3	Kt–Q1
33.	P–R4	R–K2
34.	P–R5!	PXP
35.	Kt–B6ch!	KtXKt
36.	PXKt	RXP
37.	R–K5	

Note how White finds continued use for the strong-point, K5.

37.		Kt–B2
38.	R–KKt2	Kt–R3
39.	R–Kt5	R(B3)–B2
40.	RXRP	Kt–B4
41.	Q–R3	P–R3
42.	BXKt	PXB
43.	RXRP	R–B3

Now look at the position and see whether you can see the win!



44.	R–R8ch	K–B2
45.	RXBch	K–K3
46.	R–K8!!	Resigns

If 46....RXR; 47 Q–K3 mates! The best that Black can manage is 46....R–B2; 47 Q–R6ch, K–Q2; 48 QXQch, KXQ; 49 R(8)XR, RXR(K7); 50 RXR, KXR, and Black is a piece behind.

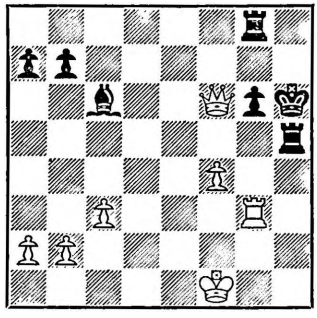
Dallas

Among the latest wrinkles is that amazing feat of chess wizardry called "rapid transit" blindfold chess. Reuben Fine, although he has never played any great number of blindfold games, handles one or two of them with the sureness and success which have characterized his several U.S. Speed Championships. My own rapid transit experiences have been confined to those occasions when my opponent decided to answer my moves quickly. The best example of this took place on February 1, 1941, when I completed my two games, each of more than 30 moves, in twelve minutes. Thus, the average time per move in the game which follows was only six seconds!

COLLE OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	A Texan
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–KB3	P–K3
3. P–K3	P–Q4
4. B–Q3	P–B4
5. P–B3	Kt–B3
6. QKt–Q2	B–Q3
7. O–O	O–O
8. PXP	BXP
9. P–K4	PXP
10. KtXP	B–K2
11. Q–K2	Q–B2
12. B–KKt5	KtXKt
13. QXKt	P–KKt3
14. KR–K1	BXB
15. KtXB	R–K1
16. QR–Q1	Q–K2
17. Q–KR4	P–KR4
18. P–KKt4	K–Kt2
19. B–Kt5	B–Q2
20. PXP	R–R1
21. BXKt	BXB
22. KtXKPch!	QXKt
23. RXQ	PXR
24. Q–K7ch	K–R3
25. QXKP	KR–KKt1
26. P–KB4	QR–K1
27. Q–B6	R–K7
28. R–Q3	R–Kt7ch
29. K–B1	RXRP
30. R–KKt3	RXRP

And now White uncorks a pretty mate in two.



31. R×Pch R×R
32. Q—R8 mate

Tableau!!

Austin

White gains an easy attack against a passive treatment of the French Defense. Black, on the other hand, usually has an uphill fight with the White Q side as the chief target. However, Black, like White, must combine defense with attack. The moves which most usually neutralize White's attacking chances are . . . . P—KB3 or . . . . P—KB4. When either or both are omitted, White's K side Pawns can roll forward to demolish Black's K side. Here, from an 8-board exhibition played on April 19, 1942, is an example of what can happen to Black when he fails to prevent a White Pawn-roller:

FRENCH DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Dr. Stephenson
1. P—K4	P—K3
2. P—Q4	P—Q4
3. Kt—QB3	Kt—KB3
4. B—KKt5	B—Kt5
5. P—K5	P—KR3
6. B—Q2	B×Kt
7. P×B	Kt—K5

Everything according to theory: White tries to develop and to bear down upon Black's K side; Black tries to weaken White's Q side.

8. B—Q3	Kt×B
9. Q×Kt	P—QB4
10. P—KB4	Kt—B3
11. Kt—B3	B—Q2

11 . . . . Q—Kt3 would have increased Black's pressure in the center.

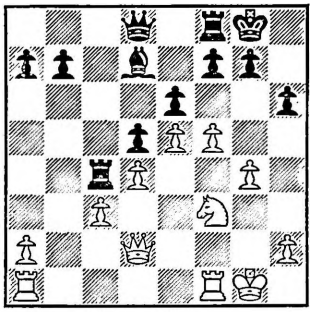
12. O—O	P×P
13. P×P	O—O
14. P—B3	R—B1
15. P—Kt4	

The White P on QB3 is a permanent weakness, and is an ideal point of focus for the Black counter-attack. White therefore begins a K-side push to tie up the Black pieces which would otherwise be concentrated against the White QBP.

15. Kt–R4?

Black ignores White's last move. It was necessary to hold back the White K-side P's. Better would have been 15 . . . . P–KB4, or 15 . . . . Kt–K2.

16. P–B5 Kt–B5
17. BXKt RXB



18. P–B6!

Black is suddenly thrown on the defensive. If 18 . . . . PXP; 19 QXP wins for White. The threat is then 20 PXP and 21 Q–Kt7 mate. Should Black play 19 . . . . PXP, then 20. Kt–Kt5 brings a quick finish.

18. K–R2
19. PXP R–Kt1

Black seeks an open file and a counter-attack.

20. Q–Q3ch KXP
21. Kt–Q2 R–QB1
22. R–B6

This move holds the position and prepares for the final assault.

22. R–KR1
23. QR–KB1 B–K1
24. Kt–Kt3 P–Kt3

This prevents the entry of the Kt by Kt–B5. White, however, has another destination in mind.

25. Kt–B1 Q–B2
26. Kt–K2 Q–B5
27. Q–B3 R–B2

Black must prevent RXBPch.

28. P–QR3 R–R2?

The fatal slip. 28 . . . . Q–R7 was better. Now Black's first rank is vulnerable.

29. RXKP! B–Kt4

On 29 . . . . PXR; 30 Q–B6ch, K–Kt1; 31 Q–B8 mate. White now announced mate in four moves.

30. Q–B6ch K–B1
31. Q–Q8ch K–Kt2
32. R–Kt6ch! KXR
33. Q–B6 mate

If 32 . . . . PXR; 33 Q–KB8 mate!

Cleveland

It was just after Columbus Day of 1942–October 14, to be exact–that I arrived in Cleveland for a 6-board exhibition against some of the best opposition this chess center had to offer. Cleveland, like New York and San Francisco and too few other cities, always manages to provide strong opposition for a visiting master.

You can understand that I find games against strong players much more enjoyable than the quick wins I am able to score against novices. Imagine being pitted against players who are unable to defeat you no matter how badly you play. The better the opposition, the better the games which result, since both the blindfold player and the local talent are forced to extend themselves from the first move to the last.

In Cleveland the visit is always made more enjoyable by such games as the ones which follow. (I won the 6 games played that evening after 3½ hours of concentrated effort and two quarts of milk.)

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Hoyt
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–B3
5. P–Q4	

No matter against whom....

5.	BXP
6. KtXB	KtXKt
7. P–KB4	P–Q3
8. P–B3	Kt–B3
9. P–B5	Q–K2?

9 . . . . P–KR3 would have prevented the strong pin which follows.

10. B–KKt5

Black had intended 10 . . . . P–Q4, which would now fail because of 11 BXKt.

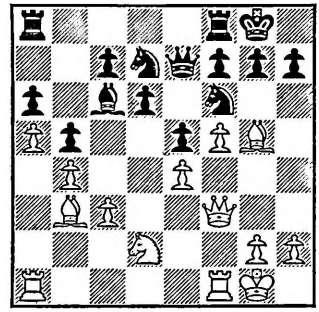
10.	B–Q2
11. P–QKt4	

Preparing the advance of the Q–side P's in case Black should play O–O–O.

11.	P–QR3
12. P–QR4	O–O
13. Q–B3	P–QKt4!

Well played! If 15 PXP, PXP; 16 RXR, RXR; 17 BXP, Kt–Q5!, and Black would have a fine game.

14. B–Kt3	Kt–Kt1
15. P–R5	B–B3
16. Kt–Q2	QKt–Q2



17. P–Kt4

High time to start something on the K side.

17.	B–Kt2
18. B–KR4	P–R3
19. Q–Kt2	P–B4

20.	P–Kt5	PXKKtP
21.	BXP	P–B5
22.	B–B2	KR–Q1

Black seems to have escaped the worst, and is now ready for a counter-attack beginning with P–Q4.

23.	R–B3	Q–B1

If 23.... Kt–B1; 24 B–R6, Kt–K1; 25 BXP, KtXB; 26 P–B6!

24.	R–R3	

No, Black didn't have a thing! Now White threatens to place his Q on the KR file and then to mate on R8.

24.		Q–K2
25.	Q–Kt3	Kt–B1
26.	Q–R4	Kt(B1)–R2
27.	BXKt	QXB

Black has no choice. He must lose a Kt—and the game.

28.	QXKtch	K–B1
29.	R–Kt3	K–K2
30.	Q–KtP	QXQ
31.	RXQ	K–B3
32.	R–Kt3	P–Q4

A last hope. Black tries to open the center, hoping that the combination of R and B will be able to regain some material.

33.	PXP	BXP
34.	Kt–K4ch	KXP
35.	R–Q1	BXKt
36.	R–B1ch	K–K3
37.	BXB	R–R2
38.	R(3)–B3	R–Kt1ch
39.	K–R1	R–KKt2
40.	R–B6ch	K–K2
41.	B–Q5	K–B1
42.	R(6)–B5	R–K2
43.	R–K1	Resigns

White will win the KP, after which the Black Q-side P's, all on the same color as White's B, will fall.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	E. E. Stearns
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–KB3	P–KKt3
3. P–KKt3	B–Kt2
4. B–Kt2	P–Q3
5. O–O	QKt–Q2
6. P–B4	O–O
7. Kt–QB3	P–K4

This move is one of the key ideas of Black's system of defense. With it, he forces the opening up of the center, and is assured of play along the K file. 8 P–Q5 would permit Black to develop a K-side attack based upon the advance of the KBP. White therefore closes the hole on his KR3.

8.	P–KR3	R–K1
9.	B–K3	P–QR3
10.	Q–Q2	

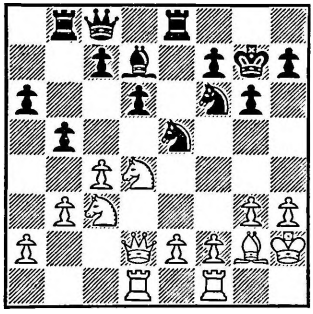
White plans to exchange the Black B on Kt2.

10.		PXP
11.	KtXP	Kt–K4
12.	P–Kt3	R–Kt1
13.	QR–Q1	B–Q2
14.	B–R6	Q–B1

Black begins to apply pressure to the White K side. However, it would have been somewhat wiser to retain the B by B–R1.

15.	BXB	KXB
16.	K–R2	P–QKt4?!

16 . . . . Kt–B3 was best. With 16 . . . . P–QKt4, Black inaugurates a farfetched attack which just misses.



17.	P–B4	P–Kt5
18.	Kt–Kt1	

Not 18 PXKt, PXP! and Black regains his piece.

18.		Kt(4)–Kt5ch
19.	PXKt	KtXPch
20.	K–Kt1	Kt–K6
21.	R–B2	B–R6

Black doesn't take the R at once because 22 QXKt, 23 Kt–Q2, and 24 P–K4 would have secured White's position and ended Black's attack. White cannot play 22 BXB because 22 . . . . QXB would win for Black.

22.	B–B6	R–K2
23.	R–B3	

23 R–K1 would have saved the R, but would have left White's position uncomfortably cramped. R–B3 is the quickest way to put an end to the Black attack, and will leave White with a material advantage sufficient to win.

23.		KtXR
24.	QXKt	B–Kt5
25.	R–B2	R–K6
26.	Kt–KB3	

Now White threatens Q–Q4ch.

26.		R–K2
27.	QKt–Q2	K–Kt1
28.	Kt–Q4	Q–B1
29.	B–B3	B–Q2
30.	Kt–B6	BXKt
31.	BXB	R–K6
32.	Kt–B3	Q–Kt2
33.	Q–Q2?	

33 Q–Q4! would have forced the exchange of Q's and would have left Black with a future-less position.

33.		Q–B6
34.	K–Kt2	

The P on KKt3 must have additional protection.

34.		R–Kt3
35.	QXQ	PXQ
36.	Kt–Q4	P–B4
37.	R–B1	RXB

Desperation—but White threatened K–B2 and the winning of the advanced Black P by R–QB1.

38.	KtXR	RXPch
39.	K–B3	

39 R–B2?, P–B7!

39.		RXP
40.	R–QB1	P–B7
41.	Kt–Q4	R–R6
42.	RXP	P–B4

43.	Kt–K2	RXPch
44.	R–B3	R–Kt5
45.	Kt–B1	K–B2
46.	K–K3	P–R3
47.	K–Q3	K–B3
48.	R–R3	R–Kt3
49.	Kt–K2	P–Kt4
50.	Kt–B3	R–B3
51.	Kt–Q5ch	K–K3
52.	RXP!	

If 52....RXR; 53 Kt–B7ch, K–B3; 54 KtXR, P–R4; 55 K–K3 wins.

52.		R–B1
53.	R–R7	Resigns

White threatens mate at K7. If Black prevents this by 53.... R–K1; 54 Kt–B7ch finishes matters.

Denver

A game which was very similar to the one you have just seen was played in an 8-board exhibition on November 19, 1942, against one of Denver's outstanding players, Dr. Scott. Black's loss in this game can be traced to his failure to prevent the exchange of his KB, an omission which enabled his blindfold opponent to secure an early win.

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Scott
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–KB3	P–KKt3
3. P–KKt3	P–Q4
4. B–Kt2	P–B3
5. O–O	B–Kt2
6. P–B4	O–O
7. Kt–B3	QKt–Q2
8. P–KR3	PXP
9. P–QR4	R–K1

Black has gained a P, and seems likely to keep it awhile. White's future lies on the K side, and his plan is to allow Black to play the freeing move 10....P–K4, because this move will emphasize the weakness of the Black squares KR3 and KB3.

10.	B–K3	P–K4
11.	Q–Q2	PXP
12.	KtXP	Kt–Kt3
13.	QR–Q1	

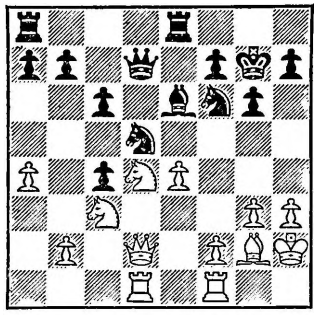
Development must precede any attack. Otherwise, B–KKt5 might be considered, to be followed by Kt–K4. However, White now plans B–R6.

13.		B–K3
14.	B–R6	Q–Q2?

14....B–R1 was called for. The B is needed for the defense of the K position.

15.	BXB	KXB
16.	K–R2	QKt–Q4
17.	P–K4	

White has not yet obtained any compensation for his P, and must therefore play sharply. The threat is now to establish a Kt on Q6, after, let's say, 17....Kt–B2; 18 P–K5, KKt–Q4; 19 Kt–K4.



17.		KtXKt
18.	QXKt	

White threatens to win the Q by Kt–B5ch.

18.		Q–K2
19.	P–B4	QR–Q1
20.	P–B5!	

This move forces the opening of the KB file, and permits White to attack the Kt on B3 again. The Black K will be immobilized for the remainder of the game.

20.		PXP
21.	KtXPch	BXKt
22.	RXR	RXR
23.	RXB	

Now the Black P on B5 must fall. Should Black protect it by 23 . . . . Q–K3, then 24 P–KKt4 or 24 Q–K3 will demolish the Black K side.

23.		R–Q6
24.	QXBP	R–Q7
25.	Q–B3!	RXBch
26.	KXR	QXPch
27.	Q–B3	Q–K2
28.	R–B4	K–Kt3
29.	Q–Q3ch	K–Kt2
30.	Q–B5	Q–K7ch
31.	K–Kt1	Q–K3
32.	Q–Kt5ch	Resigns

JAMESTOWN

One of the highlights of my appearance at Jamestown, New York, on Jan. 11, 1943, was a 4-board blindfold display against picked teams of three. On one of the boards I soon found myself playing against the fairly uncommon Queen-side fianchetto defense to the Colle. This line is much better than its reputation, but can only succeed when Black posts a piece at K5 or forces P–K4. In this game, the opposing trio attempted several plans at once, weakened in a lively middle game, and soon succumbed in a simple ending. Note how a closed game can be helped to explode into a maze of K-side attacking complications!

COLLE OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	A Trio
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–KB3	P–QKt3
3. P–K3	P–K3
4. QKt–Q2	B–Kt2
5. B–Q3	P–Q4

Black must prevent White's projected P–K4, even though it means shutting in his QB.

6.	Kt–K5	QKt–Q2
7.	P–KB4	

The advance of the K-side P's is White's best hope for an attack before Black mobilizes his forces for a Q-side demonstration.

7.		P–QB4

Black begins to go astray. The idea behind the placing of his QB on the long diagonal is the control of his K5. Best would therefore have been 7 . . . . KtXKt; 8 BPXKt, Kt–K5!

8.	P–B3	R–B1
9.	Q–B3	

This stops 9 . . . . P–B5 or 9 . . . . Kt–K5. 9 . . . . P–B5; 10 BXBP, and 9 . . . . Kt–K5; 10 KtXKt(K4) would each win a P.

9.		Q–B2
10.	O–O	B–K2
11.	R–B2!	

This appears to be the most important move in this variation. It makes place for the Kt, and also prepares for the K-side attack which soon follows.

11.		PXP
12.	KPXP	O–O
13.	P–KKt4	Kt–K1
14.	Kt–B1	P–B3!

This excellent move removes the threatening White Kt, and should permit Black to counter with P–K4.

15.	KtXKt	QXKt
16.	B–Q2	Kt–Q3
17.	Kt–Kt3	P–B4?

Black errs again. He could have attempted 17 . . . . P–K4, and would have achieved a fine game by 17 . . . . Kt–B5 and then P–K4.

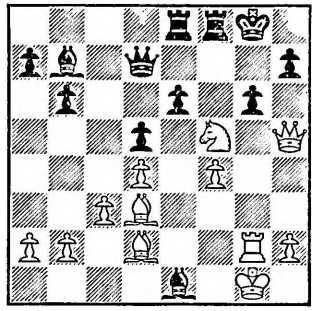
18.	PXP	KtXP
19.	R–K1	

Now Black finds himself saddled with a backward KP.

19.		B–R5
20.	R–Kt2	QR–K1
21.	Q–R5	P–Kt3?

21 . . . . BXKt was called for by the position. Black must not leave his B on R5 while the Kt and B are both attacked. Thus, 21 . . . . BXKt and then 22 . . . . P–Kt3 would have minimized the disadvantage.

22.	KtXKt	BXR



23.	Kt–R6ch	K–R1
24.	Q–K5ch	Q–Kt2
25.	BXB	QXQ

Black would have lasted a little longer with 25 . . . . RXP.

26.	BPXQ	R–B6
27.	R–Kt3	R(1)–KB1
28.	Kt–Kt4	R(6)–B2?

Black must simplify. Now his two Rooks play a limited defensive role. Better was 28 . . . . RXR.

29.	Kt–B6	R–KKt2
30.	B–Q2	R–QKt1
31.	R–R3	B–B3
32.	B–KR6	R–KB2
33.	BXP	RXKt

Black's position is hopeless. If 33 . . . . PXB, 34 B–B8ch and mate next move.

34.	PXR	R–KKt1

Or 34 . . . . PXB; 35 P–B7 and 36. B–B8 mate.

35.	B–Kt7ch	RXB
36.	PXRch	KXP
37.	BXRP	Resigns

University Chess

There is little doubt in my mind that the colleges and universities of the United States are the source of the great masters of the future. College players are able to devote a great deal of time to the game. Horowitz, Fine, Kashdan, and Pinkus, to mention but a few, won their spurs in the arena of intercollegiate play. Accordingly, I have always been happy to play against these talented young men, and for several years have given exhibitions at their annual meeting. The first such occasion was during Christmas week of 1942, when I faced 5 consulting groups, each representing the team players of one of the teams competing in the national college tourney. The two games which follow were played against the pick of the Cooper Union and New York University teams.

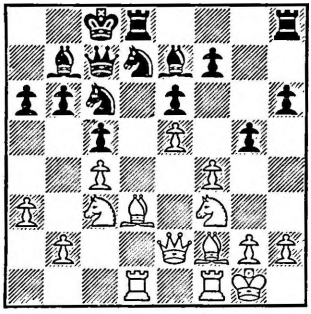
QUEEN'S INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
	F. Tucci, D. Silverstein & S. Schlaifer
Koltanowski	
1. P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2. P–QB4	P–K3
3. Kt–QB3	P–QKt3
4. P–K4	P–Q3
5. B–Q3	B–Kt2
6. P–B4	B–K2
7. Kt–B3	P–B4
8. P–K5	

Black's passive opening tactics have permitted his opponent to achieve this quick advance in the center.

8.		QPXP
9.	QPXP	KKt–Q2
10.	Q–K2	Kt–QB3
11.	B–K3	P–QR3
12.	R–Q1	Q–B2
13.	B–KB2	O–O–O
14.	O–O	P–KR3
15.	P–QR3	P–KKt4

Black makes an attempt to open up the K side, and meets a surprise which opens his position up a little more than he had desired.



16.	Kt–Q5!	PXKt
17.	PXQP	Kt(2)XP
18.	BPXKt	Kt–Q5

If 18....RXP; 19 B–B5ch, and White wins the exchange.

19.	KtXKt	RXP

19....PXKt would have been met by 20 R–QB1.

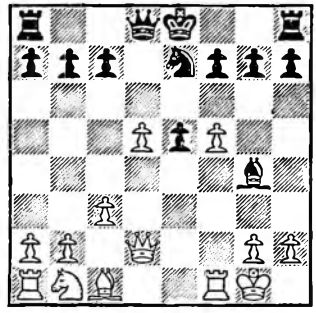
20.	Kt–B3	Q–B3
21.	B–K4	Resigns

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	B. Rumsch & W. Sollfrey
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–B3
5. P–Q4	BXP
6. KtXB	KtXKt
7. P–B4	P–Q3
8. P–B3	B–Kt5
9. Q–Q2	Kt–B3
10. P–B5	

Now White threatens to win the B by P–KR3, etc., but Black makes an original attempt to save his piece.

10.		P–Q4!
11.	BXP	KtXB
12.	PXKt	Kt–K2



13.	Q–Kt5!	P–KR4

Protecting the P on B5, White also attacks the Black B. If 13....B–K7; 14 R–K1, B–B5; 15 QXKtP, R–KKt1; 16 QXKP, with the overpowering threat of P–B6.

14. P–B6!

This is the sharpest continuation available to White. If 14....PXP; 15 QXBP, R–KB1; 16 B–R6.

14.		Kt–Kt3
15.	PXP	R–KKt1
16.	P–KR3	B–K7
17.	R–K1	QXQ
18.	BXQ	B–Kt4

If 18....B–B5; 19 Kt–R3, BXQP; 20 QR–Q1, P–QB3; 21 Kt–Kt5, K–Q2; 22 P–B4, etc.

19.	B–B6	K–Q2
20.	Kt–R3	B–Q6
21.	BXP	KtXB
22.	RXKt	B–Kt3
23.	QR–K1	RXP
24.	R–K7ch	K–Q3
25.	Kt–B4ch!	KXP
26.	RXQBP	B–K5

27.	R–Q1ch	K–K3
28.	R–Q6ch	K–B4
29.	R–B5ch	K–B5
30.	R–B6ch	K–Kt6
31.	Kt–K3	

White threatens Kt–B1ch and R–B4 mate.

31.		B–Q6
32.	RXRP	Resigns

White threatens R–B3 mate, and will achieve it after 32.... B–K7; 33 Kt–B1ch, BXKt; 34 R–B3 mate.

WASHINGTON

Washington, D. C., has always been a headache for me. Trouble is synonymous with my annual visit to the Washington Chess Divan, that Mecca of chess players so ably managed by my friend Wigginton—"Wig" to everyone in the club rooms. Every time I enter the Divan it is with a silent prayer that the boys aren't going to make mincemeat of me. Mugridge, Shapiro, Stark, Berliner—everyone but Reuben Fine seems to be hunting Kolty's scalp! But things are rarely as bad as I fear, and I generally emerge with a pleasant plus score.

Very few American players hide their losses behind the mask of anonymity. An exception occurred on October 18, 1941, when I won a Wing Gambit from a player who had to leave suddenly. I've always been sorry about his departure, for I owe him a vote of thanks. It was this game which convinced me that it would be wisest to discard the Wing Gambit for a long while!

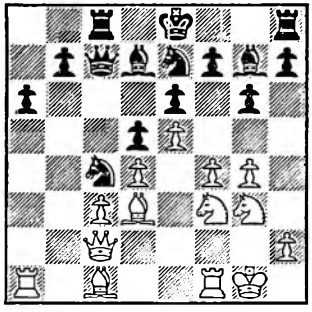
SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	A "Divanite"
1. P–K4	P–QB4
2. P–QKt4	PXP
3. P–QR3	P–Q4
4. P–K5	P–K3
5. PXP	BXPch
6. P–QB3	B–B1!
7. P–Q4	Kt–QB3
8. B–Q3	B–Q2
9. KKt–K2	R–B1
10. O–O	P–QR3
11. P–KB4	P–KKt3
12. Kt–Q2	KKt–K2
13. Kt–B3	Kt–R4
14. P–Kt4	

Black plays with a clear idea of the nature of the opening. The B returns to its original square, where it will find its place in the defense of the K side.

Both players play according to plan. White is intent upon a rapid break on the K side; Black hopes to apply strong pressure on the Q side.

14.		Kt–B5
15.	Q–B2	B–Kt2
16.	Kt–Kt3	Q–B2



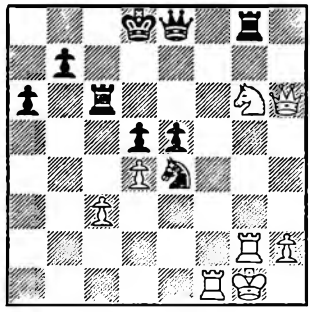
17. P–B5

The breakthrough?

17.		KtPXP
18.	PXP	PXP
19.	KtXP	KtXKt
20.	BXKt	P–R3
21.	R–R2	BXB
22.	QXB	Q–Q2
23.	P–K6	

Another P-sacrifice, this time to open up new lines of play on the K side.

23.		PXP
24.	R–K2	R–B3
25.	Kt–R4	K–Q1
26.	Q–R5	Kt–Q3
27.	B–Q2	Q–K1
28.	Kt–Kt6	R–Kt1
29.	R–Kt2	Kt–K5
30.	BXP	BXB
31.	QXB	P–K4?



Up until this point Black has succeeded in holding his own. A move such as 31 . . . . K–B2, or even 31 . . . . RXP would have turned the tables in his favor, for White's attack is ready to peter out. The ensuing ending wouldn't have been too easy, but should have resulted in a Black win. As it is, White regains one of his pawns, and also succeeds in penetrating to the back ranks.

32.	Q–R4ch	K–B2
33.	KtXP	RXRch
34.	KXR	Q–Kt1ch
35.	K–R1	RXP?
36.	Q–K7ch	K–Kt3

If 36 . . . . K–Kt1?; 37 R–B8ch.

37.	R–Kt1ch	K–R4
38.	Q–Kt4 mate	

Well, then, I had won the game! Perhaps I'd play the opening again, but never with 3 P–QR3!

Young Hans Berliner, the finest junior player to be developed by the Chess Divan, is at once a source of joy and of annoyance to his fellow Divanites. He is one of their proudest achievements, and his fine showing in the National Junior tournaments, the U. S. Open, the Yankton International Tourney, and the Masters Reserve section of the 1946 U. S. Championships clearly marks him as one of America's great players of the future. At the same time, young Hans is one of the most self-assured players in the world. He plays with such coolness that his opponents have more than once lamented their inability to ruffle him. In fact, I can justly claim to be one of the few players who have ever unnerved this young master. The occasion was an 8-board exhibition on January 24, 1945, in which I gave Hans every opportunity for an early draw, and in which he finally succumbed to one of my deepest blindfold conceptions.

COLLE OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Berliner
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
3. P–K3	P–B4
4. P–B3	B–Kt5
5. QKt–Q2	Kt–B3
6. Q–R4	

Threatening 7 Kt–K5.

6.	B–Q2
7. Q–Q1	P–K3

Black's best move was 7.... B–Kt5. White would have continued with 8 Q–R4. But Hans will have none of this drawing line, and proceeds with his development.

8. B–Q3	B–Q3
9. O–O	PXP
10. KPXP	Q–B2
11. R–K1	O–O–O!?

Black signifies his intention of playing for a quick K side attack. I would ordinarily meet such an attempt by P–QKt4 and P–QR4, but choose a more careful line in proper deference to my talented opponent.

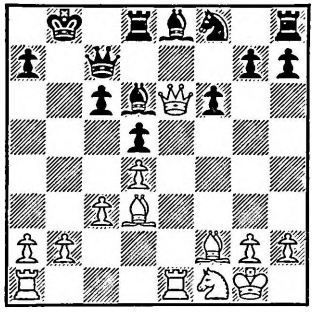
12. Q–K2	B–K1
13. Kt–K5	Kt–Q2
14. P–KB4	P–KB3
15. KtXKt(B6)	PXKt
16. QXP	BXP
17. Kt–B1!	

Necessary in view of Black's threats against the KRP, as well as such threats as 17....B–R4 and 18....KR–K1. Now the Black B must move.

17.	B–Q3
18. B–K3	K–Kt1
19. B–KB2	

White intends B–Kt3 to exchange the strong Black B.

19. **Kt–B1**



Black now receives a nasty surprise!

20. QXB!!

To me, the position cried out for this sacrifice, and I probably would have done the same thing against any opponent. To begin with, White gains a R and a B for his Q. Black's K side remains blocked, since Kt–Kt3 would be met by BXKt on White's part. White, by doubling his R's after exchanging Black's remaining B, will threaten an invasion by R(1)–K7. Finally, and this was an important consideration, the move played was a great surprise to Black; it left him with an advantage in material, but a position requiring the most careful defense. It's always advisable, you see, to play a surprise move, especially when the resulting position leaves the pull in your hands. If I could only have seen Hans' face!

20.		RXQ
21.	RXRch	K–Kt2
22.	QR–K1	P–Kt3
23.	B–Kt3	P–KR4
24.	BXB	QXB
25.	R(1)–K7ch	K–Kt3

If 25....Kt–Q2; 26 RXKtch, QXR; 27 RXR wins.

26.	R–KB7	P–Kt4
27.	R(8)–K7	

Threatening mate in three by R–Kt7ch, RXPch, and R(B7)–Kt7 mate.

27.		Q–Kt1
28.	P–QR4	

Now White threatens R–Kt7ch. Thus, 29 R–Kt7ch, QXR; 30 P–R5ch!

28.		Q–B1
29.	RXRP	

Now the threat cannot be met. 30 P–R5 would be mate!

29.		P–QB4
30.	P–R5ch	K–B3
31.	R–R6ch	QXR
32.	BXQ	PXP
33.	PXP	Kt–Q2
34.	B–Kt7ch	KXB
35.	RXKtch	K–B3
36.	R–KB7	R–QKt1
37.	RXPch	K–Q2
38.	R–QKt6	R–QR1
39.	P–QKt4	Resigns

This exhibition seemed to be a time for wild and woolly games, and a somewhat unorthodox French Defense played by Le Roy Thompson saw one of Nimzovitch's ideas succeed for White.

FRENCH DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Le Roy Thompson
1. P–K4	P–K3
2. P–Q4	P–Q4
3. Kt–QB3	B–Kt5
4. P–K5	P–QB4
5. Q–Kt4	

Theory tells us that it is unwise for either player to bring his Q out so early in the game. This variation is an exception, for the Q moves serve to block Black's K-side development while the Q remains in play as a constant threat to the Black K.

5.		K–B1
6.	B–Q2	PXP
7.	QXQP	Kt–QB3
8.	Q–KB4	P–KB4
9.	P–KR4!	KKt–K2
10.	P–R5!	

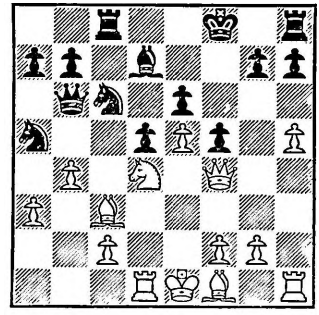
The rapid advance of this P has prevented Black from posting his Kt on KKt3. As a result, White's K-side pressure will continue unabated.

10.		B–Q2
11.	Kt–B3	Q–Kt3
12.	P–QR3	BXKt

With 12 . . . . B–B4, White would have had to continue 13 Kt–Q1.

13.	BXB	R–B1
14.	R–Q1	Kt–R4
15.	Kt–Q4	Kt(2)–B3
16.	P–QKt4	

This move opens up the game in short order. In fact, White was certain that he would now win at least a P. But Black digs deeply into the resources of his position with his next few moves.



16.		Kt–B5
17.	BXKt	Kt–K2!

More normal moves would have lost! Thus, if 17 . . . . PXB; 18 KtXKBP, and White gains a P and more. Similarly, 17 . . . . KtXKt; 18 RXKt, RXB; 19 RXR, PXR; 20 QXQBP. Now Black must recapture his piece.

18.	B–Kt2	RXB
19.	P–KKt4	

The K-side attack is under way!

19.		Q–Q1
20.	R–Q3	R–Kt1
21.	R–KKt3	P–QR3

Black realizes that his K-side position is solid, and begins action on the Q side.

22. R–QB3

Now White realizes that he cannot break through on the K side, and therefore makes this attempt to exchange the strongly placed Black R.

22.		**Q–B2**
23.	**RXR**	**QXR**
24.	**R–R4!**	

The R comes into the game at last, setting a little trap while providing indirect support to the Q on the fourth rank. If Black now plays P–KKt4, White will win by 25 PXP e.p., KtXP; 26 Q–R6ch, R–Kt2; 27 PXP!, KtXR; 28 P–B6.

24.		**K–K1**
25.	**PXP**	**PXP**

25 . . . . KtXKPt loses a piece for Black by 26 KtXKt, QXQ; 27 Kt–Q6ch.

26.	**P–K6**	**B–Kt4**

Black is desperate! He threatens mate if White moves his Kt.

27.	**Q–Kt8ch**	**Kt–B1**
28.	**KtXB!**	**QXR**
29.	**Kt–Q6ch**	**K–Q1**
30.	**QXKtch**	**K–K2**
31.	**Q–Q7ch**	**K–B1**
32.	**Q–KB7 mate.**	

Many exhibitions present me with a curious dilemma. I usually know—along general lines—what moves I am going to make against any given defense. The only times I find myself at a loss is when two or three or more of my opponents select the same defense. My problem is then to play the White side of the opening in several completely different ways, lest I find myself confusing one position with another. This has occasionally happened, and you will readily believe me when I tell you that nothing can be more embarrassing to a blindfold player than to appear to have lost control of a position. This is one of the reasons for my self-assuring feat at displays—the calling off of the positions at one or more of the boards.

A second French Defense appeared at the Divan exhibition at which the last two games were played. I decided to play this one in as simple a manner as possible, and to accept a draw as soon as the two games began to confuse me. However, Black weakened before I did!

FRENCH DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	W. K. Kirsher
1. **P–K4**	**P–K3**
2. **P–Q4**	**P–Q4**
3. **PXP**	

The Exchange Variation, which usually leads to an early draw.

3.		**PXP**
4.	**B–Q3**	**B–Q3**
5.	**Kt–K2**	**Kt–KB3**
6.	**B–KB4**	**O–O**
7.	**O–O**	**P–B4**
8.	**P–QB3**	**P–QKt3**

Everything remains quiet, as both sides develop.

9.	Kt–Q2	R–K1
10.	BXB	QXB
11.	R–K1	B–K3
12.	Kt–KKt3	Kt–B3
13.	Kt–B3	P–KR3?

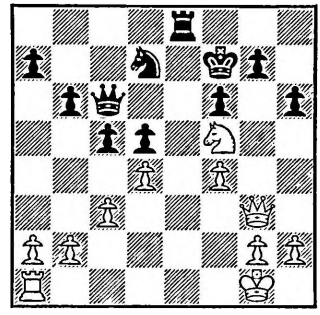
Black has made his best moves up to this point. He should now have played 13 . . . . B–Kt5, which would have prevented White's reply.

14.	Kt–K5!	Kt–Q2
15.	P–KB4	P–B3
16.	KtXKt(B6)	QXKt
17.	B–Kt6	B–B2

Now White is permitted to strip the Black K of its defenses!

18.	BXBch	KXB
19.	Kt–B5	RXRch?
20.	QXR	R–K1
21.	Q–Kt3	

All of a sudden Black finds himself in serious trouble. Mate or the loss of material cannot be avoided.



21.		R–KKt1
22.	R–K1	

Threatening R–K7ch, etc.

22.		K–B1
23.	Q–Kt6	Resigns

There is no reply to the threat of mate. If 23 . . . . Q–B1; 24 R–K7 or 24 Kt–Q6 will finish matters.

Akron

Black's loss in the last game can be traced directly to his failure to ensure proper protection for his K position. Whenever a player permits you to concentrate your forces against his K without providing full support for this all-important piece, you must win! A game played in Akron, Ohio, in October, 1945, saw my opponent saddled with a lost game after 11 moves because he neglected this basic fact of chess life.

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	An Ohioan
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–B4
4. O–O	Kt–B3
5. P–Q4	BXP
6. KtXB	KtXKt
7. P–B4	P–Q3
8. P–B3	Kt–B3
9. P–B5	O–O?

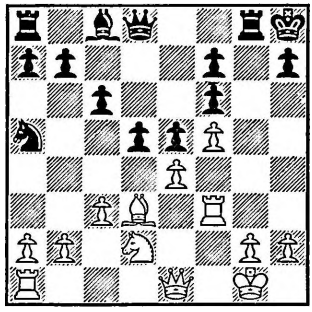
Of course Black should avoid the pin by 9 . . . . P–KR3.

10.	B–KKt5	Kt–QR4
11.	B–Q3	P–Q4?

Premature. White now lays the K position bare.

12.	BXKt	PXB
13.	Kt–Q2	P–B3
14.	R–B3	K–R1
15.	Q–K1	R–KKt1

White will now march against the K with little opposition.



16.	Q–R4	Kt–B5
17.	BXKt	PXB
18.	KtXP	B–Q2
19.	R–Q1	P–QKt4
20.	Kt–K3	Q–K2
21.	R–R3	R–Kt2
22.	Kt–Kt4	QR–KKt1

Back seals his own tomb by this attempt at counter-play. Watch!

23.	KtXBP	RXPch
24.	K–R1	R(1)–Kt2
25.	QXRPch	RXQ
26.	RXR mate	

The most active chess center in Akron is the club sponsored by the Firestone Tire and Rubber Co. It is the only club in the United States which issues a weekly newsletter. It is always a genuine pleasure to visit these players, especially since the lively newsletter keeps me informed of their relative standing, their opening favorites, their rivalries and their matches. Here is an instructive game I won in 8-board display on November 16, 1946.

QUEEN'S PAWN

White	*Black*
	A. E.
Koltanowski	Pleuddeman
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. P–QB4	Kt–KB3?

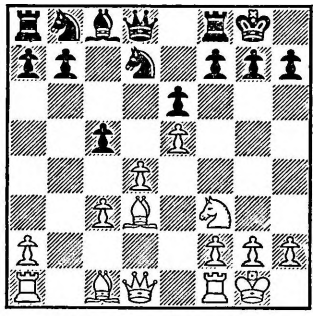
Violation No. 1: a loss of time will result.

3.	PXP	KtXP
4.	P–K4	Kt–KB3
5.	Kt–QB3	P–K3
6.	Kt–B3	B–Kt5
7.	B–Q3	O–O
8.	O–O	P–QB4

It is strange that Black should now be lost! His entire opening idea is invalid because he has

made no attempt to challenge White's control of the center. Beginning with his second move, he has proceeded to prepare his position for the familiar B-sacrifice.

9.	**P–K5**	**BXKt**
10.	**PXB**	**KKt–Q2**



11. **BXPch!**

Here's that man again!

11. **K–R1**

After KXB; 12 Kt–Kt5ch, K–Kt3; 13 Q–Kt4, P–B4; 14 Q–Kt3 is rather hopeless for Black.

12. **B–B2** **P–B3**

The only way to prevent 13 Kt–Kt5.

13. **Kt–R4** **KtXP**

White now announced mate in four—a mating idea which should be in every player's bag of tricks.

14.	**Q–R5ch**	**K–Kt1**
15.	**B–R7ch**	**K–R1**
16.	**B–Kt6ch**	**K–Kt1**
17.	**Q–R7** mate	

Let's pause a moment to ask ourselves just why Black lost that game. Was it his poor second move alone? Hardly, for he could have found better defensive moves after that slip, and could have emerged from the opening with a but slightly inferior game. The second move, however, and the weak play which followed it, were but symptoms of the disease which loses games for so many of us: the failure to apply opening theory to each opening move!

Sharon

Two days after the Akron exhibition I found myself in the lovely little Pennsylvania town of Sharon. Sharon is a peaceful place, and one would think that time was of little importance here—for everyone, that is, but the chess players! No chess player anywhere can afford to lose time in the opening, as one of my opponents discovered in a game which serves to illustrate an-

other of the ways in which the violation of opening principles is commonly punished.

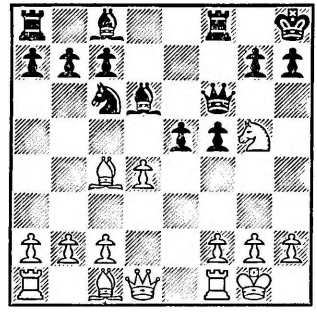
COLLE OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	John Kosa, Jr.
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
3. P–K3	P–K3
4. B–Q3	B–Q3
5. QKt–Q2	O–O
6. O–O	Kt–B3?
7. P–K4	PXP
8. KtXP	KtXKt
9. BXKt	P–B4?

This is a brutal way to free one's game. Black will have to move his KP next unless he is willing to have it remain backward for the rest of the game. Thus he wastes two moves in freeing his position at a time when every move should contribute towards some positive opening objective.

10.	B–Q3	P–K4
11.	B–B4ch	K–R1
12.	Kt–Kt5	Q–B3?

12 . . . . Q–K1 was necessary.



13.	KtXRP	KXKt
14.	Q–R5ch	Q–R3
15.	BXQ	PXB

Black should now resign, but decides to continue playing to the mate—which is not far distant.

16.	B–B7	Kt–K2
17.	PXP	BXP
18.	QR–K1	B–B3
19.	RXKt!	BXR
20.	Q–Kt6ch	K–R1
21.	QXRP mate	

Chicago

Strong young players develop wherever there is a well-organized chess club which boasts a large number of competent adult followers of the game. Chicago has produced a fair share of this country's experts, most notably Albert Sandrin and Paul Poschel. Both of these youngsters have held the Illinois State championship, and the former promises to develop into a first-rate blindfold expert. Accordingly, I'm quite proud of the wild game I won from Paul when I encountered him in an 8-board display at Chicago's famous Austin Chess and Checker Club, on February 10, 1946.

DUTCH DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Poschel
1. **P–Q4**	**P–KB4**
2. **P–K4**	

Unsound? Perhaps, but I always use it in exhibitions.

2.	**PXP**
3. **Kt–QB3**	**P–Q4?**

White can now regain his P with a slight advantage by 4 Q–R5ch. However, and I sometimes fail to understand why I do such things, I played it in gambit style.

4. **P–KB3**	**B–B4**
5. **PXP**	**PXP**
6. **KKt–K2**	**Kt–QB3**

Preventing 7 Kt–Kt3 because of 7 . . . . KtXP.

7. **P–Q5**	**Kt–K4**
8. **Q–Q4**	**Kt–Kt3**
9. **Kt–Kt3**	**P–K4!**

Black gains an important tempo and frees his K side pieces.

10. **Q–B2**	**B–Q2**
11. **Kt(Kt3)XP**	**B–QKt5**
12. **B–QB4**	**Kt–B3**
13. **O–O**	**BXKt**
14. **PXB!**	

Foreseeing the power of the B on the diagonal QR3–KB8.

14.	**O–O**

If 14 . . . . KtXKt; 15 Q–B7 mate!

15. **Kt–Kt5**

White threatens to win the exchange by 16 P–Q6 dis ch, K–R1; 17 Kt–B7ch, etc.

15.	**Q–K1**
16. **B–R3**	**P–KR3**

The Black R is trapped. If 16 . . . . Kt–K2; 17 P–Q6 dis ch, Kt(2)–Q4; 18 PXP, and the exchange still falls.

17. **BXR**	**KtXB**
18. **P–Q6ch**	**K–R1**
19. **Kt–B7ch**	**K–R2**
20. **PXP**	**Q–K2**
21. **QR–Q1**	**R–B1**
22. **Kt–Q6**	**RXP**
23. **B–Q3ch**	**K–R1**

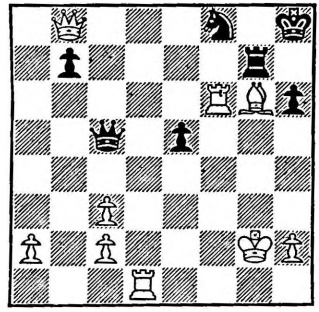
If 23 . . . . P–K5; 24 KtXKP, KtXKt; 25 QXKt.

24. **Kt–K4**	**Kt(1)–R2**
25. **QXRP**	**B–B3**
26. **Q–Kt8ch**	**Kt–B1**
27. **KtXKt**	**Q–B4ch**

27 . . . . PXKt would have lost after 28 RXP, QXR; 29 QXR, so Black makes a last attempt at a King-hunt.

28. **K–R1**	**BXPch**
29. **KXB**	**PXKt**
30. **RXP**	**R–Kt2ch**
31. **B–Kt6!**	Resigns

A curious final position:



Great Falls

The thought occurs to me as I review the games in this chapter that I have probably seen more of my adopted land than any other chess master in the world. Perhaps, if I except the traveling salesmen among my readers, I have seen more of the United States than any of you. But such is the way of a worshiper of Caissa—I go where the goddess find her devotees. And in my travels I meet the strangest towns—strange in name if in no other way. For example, have you ever heard of the town of Rattlesnake, Montana, or Black Eagle, Central Park, Goldcreek and Race Track in the same state? Well, I've been to such places, and every little town boasts a few chess players who are proud of the game. Great Falls, for example, contains less than 2,000 inhabitants, but has a lively chess group which I first visited for an 8-board demonstration on October 19, 1946. The games were completed in short order, and I was able to spend much of the evening explaining some of the basic theory of the game to players who allowed such quick wins as the following:

SICILIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	A Westerner
1. P–K4	P–QB4
2. P–QKt4	

Yes, I know I've practically given up the Wing Gambit. But this was the Far West, and that called for action!

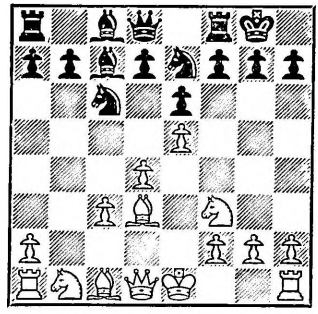
2.	P–K3?
3. PXP	BXP
4. P–Q4	B–Q3??

No sooner was this extraordinarily weak move announced than I knew just how I would play the rest of the game. This man was going to serve as an example of the famous Bishop-sacrifice in the opening, followed by a quick mate. All I had to do was prepare it.

5. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
6. P–B3	KKt–K2
7. B–Q3	O–O

Now we have it!

8. P–K5	B–B2



9. BXPch!	KXB?

The capture is suicidal. Best is 9....K–R1, although 10 Kt–Kt5 and 11 Q–R5, or 11 Q–B3 and R3, will force a quick win.

10. **Kt–Kt5ch K–Kt3**

If 10....K–Kt1?; 11 Q–R5 wins.

11. **P–KR4**

White threatens 12 P–R5ch, K–B4; 13 Q–B3 (or P–KKt4) mate.

11. **KtXKP**
12. **P–R5ch K–B4**

If 12....K–B3; 13 Kt–R7ch, K–B4; 14 Q–B2ch, Kt–Q6ch; 15 QXKtch, K–Kt5; 16 Q–K4 mate.

13. **P–KKt4ch KtXP**
14. **Q–B3ch**

And White mates on the next move.

Rochester

One of the lasting proofs of the importance of properly understanding opening theory is the ease with which visiting masters are able to punish those who do not understand it. As a demonstration of this fact, I am including a short game whose virtue, aside from brevity and decisiveness, lies in the moral it points. Learn the basic rules which make a good chess player: Develop your pieces. Do not waste time. Try to control the center of the board. Make sure that your King is properly defended. Good chess is as simple as that. Play with these principles in mind, always examining each move before you make it in order to be sure that it violates none of them, and satisfies one or more.

A game played in an 8-board exhibition in Rochester, New York, in October, 1945, saw my opponent violating every one of the opening maxims. Observe the quick punishment!

QUEEN'S PAWN

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	V. Weig
1. **P–Q4**	**Kt–KB3**
2. **P–QB4**	**P–Q4?**

Violation No. 1: a waste of time. Better 2....P–K3.

3. **PXP**	**KtXP**
4. **P–K4**	**Kt–KB3**
5. **Kt–QB3**	**P–K3?**

Violation No. 2: blocking the exit of the QB.

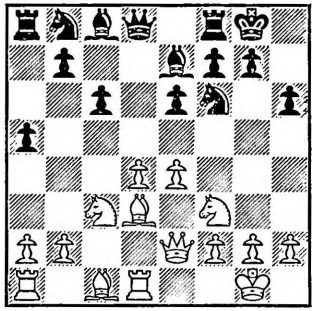
6. **Kt–B3**	**P–B3**
7. **B–Q3**	**B–K2**
8. **O–O**	**P–QR4?**

Violation No. 3: a move without purpose.

9. **Q–K2** **P–KR3?**

Violation No. 4: another purposeless move.

10. R–Q1 O–O



11. BXRP!

And there you have it. This move was made possible through Black's consistently poor opening tactics.

11. PXB
12. P–K5 Kt–R2
13. Q–K4 P–KB4
14. PXP e.p. R–B2

After 14 . . . . KtXP, White wins with 15 Q–Kt6ch, K–R1; 16 QXPch, K–Kt1; 17 Kt–Kt5.

15. Q–Kt6ch K–B1
16. QXPch K–Kt1
17. Q–Kt6ch K–R1

If 17 . . . . K–B1; 18 Kt–K5, RXP; 19 QXKt, K–K1; 20 Q–R5ch, K–B1; 21 Q–R8 mate.

18. QXR KtXP
19. Kt–K5 Resigns

Lancaster

Whereas weak players lose their games through ignorance of opening principles, stronger opponents lose through their eagerness to swap blows with the visiting master. Of course, some of them succeed in creating positions so complicated that I am lucky to remember where the pieces are. Such a game was my encounter with Milton Paul, star of Pennsylvania's Lancaster Valley Chess League, on November 24, 1946, a game in which the ability of my King to walk away from the attack was all that enabled me to continue my counterattack on the Black King.

DUTCH DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Paul
1. P–Q4	P–KB4
2. P–K4	

That bad habit of mine, again!

2. PXP
3. Kt–QB3 Kt–KB3
4. B–KKt5 P–Q4
5. P–KB3

Mixing it up again, instead of simply regaining the P by BXKt and Q–R5ch.

5. P–B3?

A move which cramps Black's game. Better is 5 . . . . P–K6.

6. PXP PXP
7. Q–Q2 B–B4
8. B–QB4 P–K3

9.	**KKt–K2**	**QKt–Q2**
10.	**Kt–Kt3**	**B–QKt5**

Black follows the understandable plan of holding his Pawn. Best, however, is 10 . . . . B–K2.

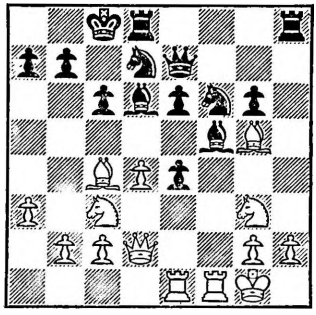
11.	**O–O**	**P–KKt3**
12.	**QR–K1**	**P–KR3!**

A well-played sacrifice which succeeds in opening up the KR file.

13.	**BXRP**	**Q–K2**

An interesting possibility was 13 . . . . Kt–Kt5; 14 B–KKt5, P–K6!!; 15 RXP!, Q–B2; 16 BXKP, and White should win.

14.	**B–KKt5**	**O–O–O**
15.	**P–QR3**	**B–Q3**



16.	**QKtXP!**	**BXKt(K5)**
17.	**KtXB**	**BXPch**
18.	**K–B2!**	

Any lion-tamer will tell you that it's safe to put your head in the lion's mouth—when you're sure his teeth are gone!

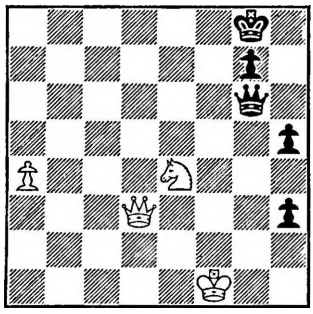
18.		**KtXKtch**
19.	**RXKt**	**QR–B1ch**
20.	**K–K2**	**Q–R2**
21.	**BXKP**	**Q–R4ch?**

Black is so certain he can get to White's K that he proceeds to compromise his position beyond repair. He should have begun looking for defensive moves such as 21 . . . . RXR; 22 KXR, R–K1.

22.	**B–Kt4**	**Q–R2**
23.	**R–K7**	**R–K1**
24.	**BXKtch**	**K–B2**
25.	**BXRch**	Resigns

Hollywood

Every player feels that he has won a few endings which were played so beautifully on his part that they could well have been compositions by some great problemist. The ending of which I am most proud occurred here in an 8-board blindfold exhibition in December, 1945. I had won a Kt for 2 P's, but had met fierce resistance until this position was reached:



1. **Q–Q8ch K–R2**

If 1....K–B2; 2 Kt–Kt5ch wins the Black Q.

2. **Kt–Kt5ch K–R3**
3. **Q–Q6!!** Resigns

White threatens to exchange Q's and then to advance his RP. Thus, 3....KXKt; 4 QXQch, KXQ; 5 P–R5, and Black's K is too far away. And 3....QXQ loses for Black because of 4 Kt–B7ch and 5 KtXQ. Try this one out on your friends!

Manhattan Chess Club

My 1946 exhibition at the Manhattan Chess Club was against a group which included several of New York's most promising players. It was quite an evening–for me, a successful one. I lost only one game, to the Cuban expert, Juan Gonzalez, and played some of the best blindfold chess of my career on the other boards. Here, for example, is the game against Arthur Bisguier, former Bronx County Champion, Champion of the Manhattan Chess Club, and now Champion of the United States!

KING'S INDIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Bisguier
1. **P–Q4**	**Kt–KB3**
2. **Kt–KB3**	**P–Q4**
3. **P–K3**	**P–KKt3**
4. **P–QB4**	**B–Kt2**
5. **Kt–B3**	**O–O**
6. **Q–Kt3**	**P–B3**
7. **B–Q2**	**P–Kt3**
8. **B–K2**	**PXP**

Black makes this move so that he can later gain a tempo through forcing the White B to move again.

9. **BXP**	**QKt–Q2**
10. **O–O**	**B–Kt2**
11. **QR–Q1**	**P–B4**
12. **B–B1**	

White does not mind a double P on KB3 in case Black should now play BXKt. The open KKt file would eventually be utilized in an attack against the Black K.

12.	**PXP**
13. **PXP!**	

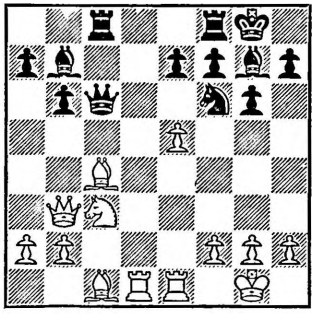
This move is far superior to KtXP or RXP. The White P on Q4 will prove to be a thorn in Black's game.

13.	**R–B1**
14. **Kt–K5**	

Threatening KtXBP.

14.		**Q–K1**
15.	**KR–K1**	**KtXKt**
16.	**PXKt**	**Q–B3!**

Bisguier's intentions are as mean as one could expect from a young master. He threatens mate in one, and also attacks the White B a second time. If 17 B–B1, Kt–Kt5 gives Black a clear superiority. But White has a surprise for his young opponent:



17. **Kt–Q5!**

Now if 17....QXB; 18 KtX Pch, K–R1; 19 PXKt, and if 19 ....QXQ, White wins a piece by PXBch and then PXQ, while if 19....BXP; 20 KtXR.

17.		**KtXKt**
18.	**BXKt**	**Q–B2**
19.	**BXB**	

This exchange puts an end to Black's mating threats, while White's control of the center will enable him to assume the initiative.

19.		**QXB**
20.	**P–K6!**	**Q–B3**

If 20....P–B4; 21 R–Q7, R–B2; 22 B–B4, RXR; 23 PXRch and 24 RXP wins.

21.	**PXPch**	**RXP**

This permits White to simplify to an easily-won ending. Better is 21....K–R1.

22.	**RXP**	**Q–B3**
23.	**RXR**	**QXR**
24.	**QXQch**	**KXQ**
25.	**B–K3**	**K–K3**

If 25....BXP; 26 R–Q7ch and 28 RXQRP.

26. **R–QB1!**

Black cannot afford to exchange R's, and so must surrender the open file.

26.		**R–Q1**
27.	**P–QKt3**	**B–Kt7**
28.	**R–B6ch**	**K–Q4**
29.	**R–B7**	**K–K5**

Black's last hope is that White will overlook the mate.

30. **K–B1**

He doesn't, and now threatens to pick up another P or two.

30.	Resigns

Herbert Avram, who faced me on one of the other boards, is an imaginative player whose play in this game shows strong evidence of the influence of Nimzovitch, and perhaps of the

Manhattan Club's own theoretician, Alexander Kevitz. Until he weakened, Avram had at least a draw in hand. But then, who could possibly keep his head after a completely mad opening?

NIMZOVITCH DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Avram
1. P–K4	Kt–QB3
2. P–Q4	P–K4

Black would welcome 3 P–Q5, QKt–K2; with White soon having troubles because of the inevitable P–KB4 by his opponent.

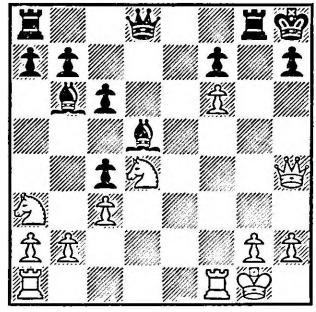
3. PXP	KtXP
4. P–KB4	Kt–Kt3
5. B–K3	B–Kt5ch
6. P–B3	B–R4
7. B–B4	P–QB3
8. B–Q4	Kt–B3
9. P–K5	Kt–Kt5!

I had expected some other move by this piece, since I had already dismissed Kt–Kt5 as a blunder. But watch!

10. QXKt	P–Q4
11. Q–B3	PXB
12. Kt–K2	B–K3
13. O–O	

13 P–B5 was impossible due to 13 . . . . Kt–R5.

13.	Kt–R5
14. Q–Kt3	Kt–B4
15. Q–B2	O–O
16. Kt–R3	KtXB
17. KtXKt	B–Kt3
18. P–B5	B–Q4
19. P–B6	PXP
20. PXP	K–R1
21. Q–R4	R–KKt1



Now it is Black who threatens mate by BXKtch, RXPch, R–Kt5ch, and BXR mate. White is thrown on the defensive.

22. R–B2	Q–Q2
23. Kt(3)–B2	R–Kt5
24. Q–R6	BXKtP!

If 24 . . . . QR–Kt1, 25 Kt–K3 would make White's position too solid for any immediate attack. Black therefore decides on this sacrificial line, which at least should have drawn!

25. RXB	RXRch
26. KXR	R–Kt1ch
27. K–B1	BXKt?

27 . . . . P–B4 would have regained the piece, and would have left Black with the better game. The exchange allows White to escape.

28. KtXB	P–B4
29. Kt–B3	Q–Kt5

30.	K–B2	Q–Kt7ch
31.	K–K3	QXKtP

31 . . . . R–K1ch was meaningless because of 32 K–B4.

32.	R–K1	QXPch
33.	K–B2	Q–B7ch
34.	R–K2	Q–B4
35.	R–K8	

White realizes that the Black Q side P's will be bothersome, and therefore plays this move to force the draw by perpetual check.

Black's next is forced, for 35 . . . . Q–Kt3 allows 36 QXQ, RPXQ; 37 R–K7, and the Black P's fall.

35.		Q–B7ch
36.	R–K2	Q–R5??

Black prevents R–K8, but not . . .

37.	Kt–Kt5	Resigns

Black must play 37 . . . . RXKt; 38 QXR, and mate at Kt7 cannot be avoided.

New York City is one of the few places I can think of where women play chess well. Mrs. Maude Stephens, Secretary of the Manhattan Chess Club, has had ample opportunity to observe examples of correct play, and her game with me indicated that she had only to overcome a certain timidity in order to advance to the first rank among players of the fair sex.

ALEKHINE'S DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Mrs. Stephens
1. P–K4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–QB3	P–K4
3. Kt–B3	P–Q3
4. B–B4	B–KKt5
5. P–Q3	Kt–B3
6. P–KR3	BXKt
7. QXB	Q–Q2
8. B–K3	O–O–O
9. P–KKt4	P–KR3
10. P–QR3	R–K1
11. Kt–Q5	KtXKt
12. BXKt	P–KB3
13. Q–B5	QXQ
14. KtPXQ	K–Q2
15. K–Q2	Kt–Q1
16. P–QKt4	P–QB3
17. B–Kt3	P–QR3
18. P–QB4	P–QKt4
19. P–B4	Kt–Kt2
20. KR–K1	P–QB4
21. BPXKtP	RPXP
22. B–Q5	K–B2
23. P–QR4	KtPXRP
24. RXP	B–K2
25. R–R7	R–QKt1
26. R–QKt1	Resigns

Black must lose a piece.

BUFFALO

One of the great advantages of the Colle is the ease with which White can achieve a simplified ending in which he has the most minute advantage—a majority of P's on the Q side. Although the

sort of ending I reached in this game, played in an exhibition at Buffalo, New York, on January 15, 1947, is very "drawish," White does have whatever winning chances there are. My opponent in this game was Buffalo's rising star, and champion of the University of Buffalo.

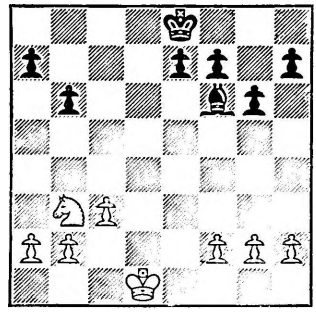
COLLE OPENING

	White	*Black*
	Koltanowski	Siegel
1.	P–Q4	Kt–KB3
2.	Kt–KB3	P–Q4
3.	P–K3	P–QB4
4.	P–QB3	QKt–Q2
5.	B–Q3	P–KKt3
6.	QKt–Q2	B–Kt2
7.	O–O	O–O
8.	R–K1	R–K1
9.	P–K4	PXKP
10.	KtXP	PXP
11.	KtXKtch	KtXKt
12.	KtXP	P–Kt3

White has achieved his favorable P position on the Q side, and will now proceed to simplify by exchanges.

13.	B–QKt5	B–Q2
14.	B–KKt5	Q–B2
15.	BXB	QXB
16.	Kt–Kt3	QR–Q1
17.	QXQ	RXQ
18.	QR–Q1	KR–Q1
19.	RXR	RXR
20.	BXKt	BXB
21.	K–B1	K–B1
22.	K–K2	R–Q4
23.	R–Q1	RXR
24.	KXR	K–K1

And now the ending has been reached. White will try to force a passed P on the Q side.



25.	K–K2	K–Q2
26.	K–Q3	K–Q3
27.	Kt–Q2	K–Q4
28.	P–QR4	P–KR3
29.	P–KB4	P–K4
30.	PXP	BXP
31.	P–R3	B–B5
32.	Kt–B3	B–Kt6
33.	P–QKt4	B–Kt1
34.	P–Kt5!	

Played with a view to posting the Kt on QB6.

34.		B–K4
35.	P–B4ch	K–Q3
36.	P–B5ch!!	

This does it! The P is sacrificed so as to permit the entry of the White K.

36.		PXP
37.	K–B4	B–Q5?

This loses in short order. Best was 37 . . . . B–B5.

38.	KtXB	PXKt
39.	KXP	P–B4
40.	P–R5	P–Kt4
41.	P–Kt6	PXP
42.	PXP	P–Kt5
43.	P–Kt7	K–B2
44.	P–R4!	P–B5
45.	K–K4	P–B6
46.	PXP	PXP

If 46....P–Kt6; 47 K–K3 wins.

47.	KXP	KXP
48.	K–Kt4	K–B3
49.	K–R5	K–Q2
50.	KXP	K–K2
51.	K–Kt7	Resigns

Endicott

Endicott, New York, is the home of the International Business Machines Corporation. IBM has an extremely active chess group, and has been the seat of several fine tournaments, including the New York State championships. Tom McConnon, a good friend and former President of the New York State Chess Association, is the club's guiding spirit.

My 8-board exhibition of January 17, 1947, was remarkable in that, for the first time, two men who had been acclaimed the world over as memory marvels met over the chessboard. I refer to Dr. Salo Finkelstein, one of the nation's finest mathematicians and a man who is able to complete calculations more rapidly than a calculating machine. My recollection is that Dr. Finkelstein was kept busy during a recent election doing the tabulations of the returns without reference to pencil, paper, or adding machines!

HUNGARIAN DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Finkelstein
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–K2
4. O–O	P–Q3
5. P–Q4	B–Kt5
6. PXP	KtXP
7. B–K2	KtXKtch

Black seems anxious to reach the ending as soon as possible.

8.	BXKt	BXB
9.	QXB	B–B3
10.	Kt–B3	BXKt
11.	QXB	P–KB3?

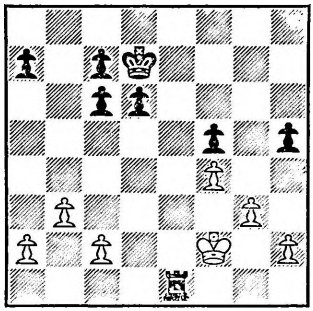
11....Kt–B3 is much better.

12.	P–KB4	Q–Q2
13.	P–K5	Q–B3
14.	QXQ	PXQ
15.	P–QKt3	P–KR4?

Black has succeeded in approaching the ending, but now weakens his Pawn-formation unnecessarily.

16.	B–Kt2	O–O–O
17.	PXBP	KtXP
18.	BXKt	PXB
19.	QR–K1	QR–K1
20.	K–B2	K–Q2
21.	P–Kt3	P–KB4
22.	RXR	RXR
23.	R–K1	RXR?

Black must lose after this exchange. As a general rule, the player with the inferior Pawn-position should try to avoid the exchange of his last remaining pieces.



24.	KXR	K–K3
25.	K–K2	P–QB4
26.	P–KR3	P–Q4
27.	K–B3	P–QR4
28.	P–KKt4	P–KR5
29.	P–Kt5	

This advanced P will keep the Black K occupied while the White K goes Pawn-hunting on the Q side.

29.		K–B2
30.	K–K3	K–K3
31.	K–Q3	K–Q3
32.	K–B3	P–Q5ch
33.	K–Kt2	K–K3
34.	K–R3	K–Q4
35.	K–R4	K–K5

Black, seeing that White will soon have another free P, makes an attempt to secure one himself.

36.	P–Kt6	KXP
37.	P–Kt7	K–Kt6
38.	P–Kt8(Q)ch	KXP
39.	Q–Kt5	Resigns

CHAPTER TEN

Odds and Ends

SO MANY LITTLE THINGS REMAIN UNTOLD AT THE END OF ANY recounting of a man's career. For instance, there was the time a customs guard insisted upon the payment of a 20 per cent tax on a $500 bank draft I had been carrying as a reserve. I refused to pay it, and was threatened with all the usual penalties until I tore up the draft and gave the pieces to the amazed official. I knew that the home branch of the issuing bank would issue a duplicate upon request!

Then there was the time I played and won a match against Henry Grob, the Swiss Champion, a match which proved my worth to the many friends I had made in that little country. There was the time in Madrid when the bullets began to fly, and two of my neighbors shot it out across the street on which I lived. There was the time I spent 26 hours traveling less than a hundred miles during one of those blizzards which only the Western United States can produce.

But, perhaps it's not wise to try to tell everything in one volume. So, let's just fill this last chapter with some of the odds and ends which help to make the life of a traveling chess master interesting. For example, have you ever heard of the Knight's Tour? It's not a very difficult feat, but one which most chess fans find an amazing exercise of memory. The Knight begins at any square and must move about the board until it has touched every square—without having touched the same square twice. There are some fifty different ways of doing this, but most players have never bothered to learn one of them. Of course, the Tour can be performed blindfold once you have mastered a few of the routes. To prove that I do not receive any help, I make it a practice to ask one of the young ladies in my audience to name

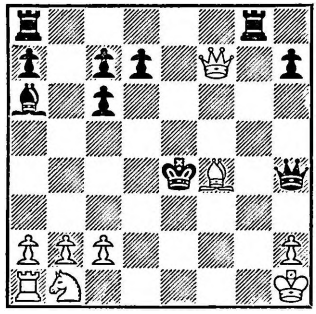
the square from which I am to begin. Club players are always engrossed by the performance.

A good showman never repeats the same trick twice in the same manner. Accordingly, my second appearance at a club will see me doing a Re-entrant Tour. That is, I must complete the trip of the Knight so as to be able to move back into the same square from which I began. And when I found that neither form of the Knight's Tour was getting the old audience reaction, I devised a new and more difficult variant which I have dubbed "Koltanowski's World Tour." I ask members of the audience to give me their telephone numbers or the names of some cities they have always wanted to visit. I place these on the squares of a large board, study them for a minute or two, and then perform the Re-entrant Tour with the places and telephone numbers replacing the names of the square. Thus, in one move, I can go from Chicago to Minsk! Interesting? Listen to what the *Saratogian,* of Saratoga, New York, had to say in its issue of August 21, 1945:

"Devotees of chess attending the annual meeting of the New York State Chess Association in the Crystal Ballroom of the Grand Union Hotel and including not a few chatterboxes, actually kept silence for three minutes, last night, the while George Koltanowski, erstwhile Belgian Champion, sat in front of a huge chessboard and put his marvelous memory to work. On each of the 64 squares had been written names of places from Moscow to Timbuctoo, and a few telephone numbers. It was his task to remember them all and then do what is known as the 'Knight's Tour.' Presently he awoke from his mediumistic slumber, declared he was ready and turned his back, but in plain view of the audience. With Edward Lasker crossing off the squares as the blindfold champion called them out, Koltanowski covered most of the United States and a good portion of the globe to boot. Incidentally, he recalled all the phone numbers. Hearty applause greeted the completion of the 'tour' which few of the chess masters can accomplish in this odd fashion."

Every now and then I come across a position which is of sufficient interest to be put into print in the form of a competition. Such a position occurred during my 8-board exhibition at the Northwestern Mutual Insurance Company in Milwaukee in

March, 1947. I was able to announce a mate in eight, but felt certain that there was a prettier win on the board.



1.	Kt—B3ch	K—Q5
2.	R—Q1ch	K—B4
3.	B—K3ch	K—Kt5
4.	P—R3ch	K—R4
5.	P—Kt4ch	QXP
6.	PXQch	KXP
7.	Q—Kt3ch	K—R4
8.	R—R1 mate	

At the end of my 1947 tour I sent a thank-you letter to all of the clubs and players I had visited. Included in this letter was the above position and my handling of it. I promised a prize to the first 20 players who could find a mate in fewer than eight moves, and was agreeably surprised when the postman began bringing me batches of replies. My wife insisted that everyone who sent in a correct solution deserved a prize. In the end, I sent out many more than I had intended to.

The replies showed that the position can be solved by mates in seven, six and five moves. However, I'm not satisfied, and am willing to bet that it can be done in four! Look at it carefully, for I hereby re-open my offer. I'll give a special book prize to anyone who can find a mate in four in the above position. Just send me your solution in care of the publisher of this book.

At the request of several of those who sweated over the position, I also promised that their names would appear in my book on blindfold chess if and when I managed to complete it. Accordingly, here are the names of those who sent me a correct solution:

Maurice S. Kuhns, Chicago, Illinois
Willard Cobb, Greeneville, Tennessee
Frank Berlin, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Lee Barry, Briscoe, Texas
James W. Thornburg, Hill City, South Dakota
Dr. John Leech, Calallen, Texas

J. G. Sullivan, Knoxville, Tennessee
T. M. Cherington, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
William Newberry, Alton, Illinois
Rev. George W. Cooper, Parkland, Washington
Rev. Henry C. Spear, Berlin, Wisconsin
D. J. Gray, Denver, Colorado
Jerome Kraszewski, Milwaukee, Wisconsin
T. Edward Knorr, Union, New Jersey
J. B. Gee, Sacramento, California
Marvin Katz, Greeley, Colorado
George Gadney, Farrell, Pennsylvania
Harold M. Anderson, Vestal, New York
Goetze Jeter, Manitou Springs, Colorado
Martin Southern, Knoxville, Tennessee
Martin G. Ettlinger, Pasadena, California
Theodore Shedlevsky, New York, N. Y.
Charles E. Sitz, Akron, Ohio
Herbert Betker, Riverbank, California
U. S. Smith, Willernie, Minnesota
A. C. Davis, Atlanta, Georgia
M. L. Harris, National City, California
H. A. Finch, Jr., McKinney, Texas
Harry L. Uhler, Denver, Colorado
F. A. Holloway, Grand Rapids, Michigan
Hyman Mitchner, Vancouver, B. C., Canada
William F. B. Clevenger, Des Moines, Iowa
H. L. Bowman, New York, N. Y.
Michael Golben, Lexington, Kentucky
Abel Bomberault, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania
John W. Hildebrand, Jr., Clayton, New Jersey
William M. Black, Lynchburg, Virginia
Eugene P. Peltier, Monrovia, California
Neil Power, Snohomish, Washington
E. Edgar Hinkle, West Reading, Pennsylvania
N. J. Lunde, Evansville, Wisconsin
Mrs. K. C. Leonard, Oshkosh, Wisconsin
John E. Leuenberger, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin
Miss Margery Newton, Wilson, North Carolina
John E. Hanson, North Andover, Massachusetts
Tom Shoemaker, Santa Rosa, California
Floyd E. Hebert, Seattle, Washington

Allan Kelly, Santa Rosa, California
R. F. King, San Antonio, Texas
Sven Brask, Attleboro, Massachusetts

How to Improve Your Playing Strength

The two questions most frequently put to me by club players are these: "How can I improve my play?" and "How do you play blindfold chess?" The answer to the second question is also the answer to the first. Blindfold play will improve your game more rapidly than any textbook, and will do it in a more enjoyable way. And you can begin to play blindfold chess as soon as you convince yourself that you don't have to be a master to try it!

Everyone plays blindfold chess without knowing it. Whenever you play a game over the board, you're always saying to yourself: "What do I do if he does that?" In the course of a game you have visualized dozens of positions which never appeared on the board. This is the essence of blindfold play.

How many openings do you think you know? Is it three or four or forty-four? Well, whenever you "know" an opening you are able to play its first few moves with or without a board. For example, I've included many games in this book which begin with the Max Lange Opening. Do you remember it?

1.	P–K4	P–K4
2.	Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3.	B–B4	B–B4
4.	O–O	Kt–B3
5.	P–Q4	

Now, I doubt that you had to set up your board and men in order to visualize these few moves. Familiarity with the opening enables you to play it blindfolded or otherwise. But then, enough of this attempt to convince you. Let's see just what technique you can use in order to play a game blindfolded.

To begin with, you need an opponent who knows the chess notation. You aren't going to use a board or pencil and paper. You simply sit down with your back to the board and men and make your first move. Listen to Koltanowski talking to Koltanowski as he plays a blindfold game:

KOLTANOWSKI: (aloud) "P–K4."
OPPONENT: "P–K4."
KOLTANOWSKI: (mentally) P–K4, P–K4. And now I will play Kt–KB3. (aloud) "Kt–KB3."
OPPONENT: "Kt–QB3."
KOLTANOWSKI: (mentally) P–K4, P–K4; Kt–KB3, Kt–QB3. I am attacking his Pawn and he is defending it. I'll get another piece into play. B–B4. (aloud) "B–B4."
OPPONENT: "Kt–B3."
KOLTANOWSKI: (mentally) P–K4, P–K4; Kt–KB3, Kt–QB3; B–B4, Kt–B3. This is the Two Knights Defense. I've played against it very often. Now I play Kt–Kt5. (aloud) "Kt–Kt5."

And so it goes. You continue to repeat every move which has been made, both your own and your opponent's, before each move that you announce. Although this may be wearisome at first, you will soon find that you can repeat all the preceding moves in a few seconds, and that doing so will give you a firm grasp of the position. After a few games you will find that the opening moves remain firmly fixed in your mind. Nevertheless, continue to repeat every move that has been made!

Once you go wrong, the only thing you can do is resign. By "going wrong," I mean making an impossible move. A bad move, such as one which loses a piece or a pawn, should not discourage you. Play on until you announce an illegal move.

My next bit of advice is not dictated by the fear that one of my readers will supplant me as the visiting blindfold master, but: *Never play more than one blindfold game at a time.* After you have become a first-class player you can attempt any number. But you are going to begin blindfold play to improve your playing strength. Therefore, concentrate on the positive values to be derived from learning to play *one* blindfold game well.

As you go along, you will discover that your ability to handle over-the-board positions is increasing. Your ability to concentrate will become more highly developed. Most important of all, you will find, as many of my pupils have reported, that you will have ceased making simple blunders. No longer will you put your pieces on squares where they can be captured. No longer will you

be the target for simple little traps. Anyone who can play a game of chess blindfolded will be able to see every one of the obvious threats with which the average game abounds.

Playing blindfold chess will prove a surprise in other ways as well. You will soon notice that you are training yourself to remember things. Telephone numbers will stick in your mind; the shopping list will become a thing of the past. As for the blindfold games themselves, you will find that you will be able to write down the full score of a game without using a board or men as long as a week after you play it. By the way, you'll find everything much simpler if you memorize the appearance of the board by some method such as I used. See Chapter Three if you don't remember what I did.

Bogart Plays Koltanowski

Here is what the San Francisco *Chronicle* reported on the Bogart Incident (March 6, 1952):

Movie tough guy Humphrey Bogart took a beating at chess from *Chronicle* chess expert George Koltanowski here yesterday, but his hard, aggressive attacks had the master squirming more than once in the course of a 45-minute game. "A real menace," said Koltanowski. "This guy is dangerous and I'm not kidding."

Bogart, who said he learned his chess "in those old shooting galleries when I was a kid in New York," opened his game with what is technically termed a "French Defense"—he moved the Pawn in front of his King one square forward.

Koltanowski was sitting with his back to the board and calling out his moves without looking. By the 16th move he had lost a Bishop and a Knight—two very important pieces. "A nasty, nasty threat," he said.

"That's right, bub," said Bogart. Then Koltanowski captured one of Bogart's Knights and was on his way to victory.

"Bub, bub, bub, diddle-diddle," muttered Bogart, pulling his lip and thinking hard. "Now, I don't know what to do."

"Undoubtedly you will move your Queen's rook," said Koltanowski.

"Right you are," said Bogart. He moved more slowly for the rest of the game, capturing as much as he lost, but tiring fast. He made Koltanowski dance a bit near the end by surrounding his King, but he couldn't make it stick.

Kolty made his forty-first move. "Check!" he said. "I'm punchy now," said Bogart. "I resign."

"I ain't played a serious game for about two years," said Bogart. "So long, champ. Come and see me in the movies."

White	*Black*		
Koltanowski	Bogart		
1. P–K4	P–K3	*20.* BXKt	PXB
2. P–Q4	P–Q4	*21.* Q–B4	R–K1
3. PXP	PXP	*22.* QR–K1	R–K4
4. B–Q3	Kt–KB3	*23.* RXP	RXR
5. Kt–K2	B–KKt5	*24.* QXR(K4)	B–B3
6. O–O	B–Q3	*25.* Q–K3	R–K2
7. P–KB3	B–K3	*26.* Q–Kt3	R–K1
8. B–KB4	O–O	*27.* P–B6	P–KKt3
9. QKt–Q2	Kt–QB3	*28.* Q–R4	P–KR4
10. P–B3	Kt–K2	*29.* R–K1	RXRch
11. BXB	QXB	*30.* QXR	Q–Q3
12. P–KB4	P–QB4	*31.* KtXB	QXKt
13. Kt–B3	Kt–B4!	*32.* Q–K7	Q–B1
14. Q–Q2	Kt–K5!	*33.* P–KR3	Q–B3
15. Q–B1	QR–B1	*34.* P–QKt4	QXP(B6)
16. PXP	QXPch	*35.* Q–K8ch	K–R2
17. Kt(2)–Q4	KtXKt	*36.* QXPch	K–R3
18. KtXKt	R–B2	*37.* Q–K7	Q–B8ch
19. P–B5	B–Q2	*38.* K–B2	Q–KB5ch
		39. K–K2	Q–QB5ch
		40. K–B3	K–Kt4?
		41. P–B7ch	Resigns

Promotion of Chess

For many years I have devoted all of my time to promotion of chess in California. The San Francisco *Chronicle* has carried a daily chess column for years now, and the Los Angeles *Daily News* has a daily chess column too. The San Francisco *Chronicle* has helped promote many events that have been beneficial to chess, and has created a widespread interest in the game in the West. Here are a few of these outstanding occasions: On December 4, 1949, I played 271 games simultaneously at the Marines

Memorial Club in San Francisco. The following is Jim Grady's report of the event on KCBS program "This is San Francisco" on December 5, 1949:

I have some news this morning for children who don't like spinach or squash. Get a chess set and tell your folks you're going to be an expert like George Koltanowski. He doesn't eat spinach or squash either.

I got these "inside" facts from Mrs. Koltanowski at the chess festival yesterday afternoon as I waited to take my place at one of the 37 boards opposite her famous husband. Mrs. Koltanowski doesn't play chess, because taking care of George is a full-time job. In addition to her home chores she helps with the typing of his books and articles, and sees to it that he's kept in shape for the grueling job of being a chess master.

Yesterday, he set a record, playing 271 games between 10 A.M. and 10 P.M., winning 251, losing 3 and drawing 17. For most of the time, he was on his feet, making a tour of the 37 tables about once every five minutes. They had a wheel chair for him, but he found it too slow. He smoked cigarettes continuously, drank a lot of black coffee, and stopped once in a while for a bite of a ham sandwich on rye.

Mrs. Koltanowski says George keeps fit for this kind of life without any more exercise than shoving the men around the board. For relaxation he likes music and opera, and is also a phenomenally good bridge player. And, she says, for a genius, he's awfully easy to live with.

Incidentally, the news that George doesn't like spinach or squash tickled 11-year-old Patricia Katz. She *likes* those foods, but since she has been playing chess only four months, there's no way to tell if it will influence her game.

Just then the public address system called "Jim Grady," and I went through the silent line of kibitzers and took my place behind the board. At the same time J. R. Peterson of the Telephone Chess Club sat down next to me. He had played against George last month in an 8-board blindfold match, and showed me some pictures of the affair. Although Mr. Koltanowski *is* blindfold champion, he played these games with his eyes open—very wide open.

Then, he was standing opposite me—a short, stocky, dark-haired man, wearing a light green tie with a chess board on it. Playing the White pieces, he made the first move—pawn to King 4, and was off down the row. It was there I made my first mistake. As a novice, I had played all my chess against the diagrams in a book, where I played the White

men. So I forgot I was playing Black and was in the process of castling when I discovered I was doing it on the wrong side of the board.

However, this turned out to be an advantage. Only experts castle on the Queen side, and for about 10 moves, Mr. Koltanowski played it very close and cagey trying to figure what I was up to. I was beginning to feel that chess was only a king-sized checker game and even checked the master on two occasions. But all of a sudden—about an hour and 45 minutes after I'd started—I got a little too big for my breeches and made what I thought was a brilliant move.

Mr. K was slighty amazed, looked for a trap and, finding none, took my piece with a superior wave of the hand, and I was through. Dave Ohman, of the Chronicle's special service, who put on the festival, said I shouldn't feel too badly. "Mr. Koltanowski is here in the Bay Area," he told me, "to get more people interested in the great game of chess." And from the response to his articles, Mr. Ohman reports, things are booming on the black and white squares. Maybe soon in San Francisco, the children will take to chess as they do to baseball. In Europe, I understand, they start playing even before they can say "checkmate."

On December 2, 1951, I played 50 boards blindfold (one at a time, ten seconds a move). I won 43, lost 2, and drew 5 in 8½ hours of play. Some 1500 paid spectators attended this outstanding festival. Here is an example from this show.

GAME NO. 24:

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	J. D. Gallagher (Stockton)
1. P–K4	P–QB3
2. P–Q4	P–Q4
3. P–KB3	Kt–Q2

Meant to lead astray! Better would be PXP or P–K5.

3.

3 . . . . PXP; 4 PXP, P–K4 is the line.

4. P–K5 Kt–KR3

P–K3 was necessary here.

5. BXKt PXB
6. P–KB4 B–Kt2
7. P–K6

A move earlier this might have resulted in 6 P–K6, PXP?; 7 Q–R5 mate.

7. PXP
8. Q–R5ch K–B1
9. P–QB3 R–KKt1
10. B–Q3 Kt–Kt3
11. BXRP R–R1
12. B–Kt6 Kt–B5
13. Kt–B3 Q–Kt3
14. P–QKt3 Kt–Q2
15. Kt–K5 Q–Kt4
16. B–Q3 Q–Kt3
17. Kt–Kt6ch K–Kt1
18. KtXKPch Resigns

Old Stamping Ground

Since I finished the first part of this book, I have been to Europe a number of times. In 1952, I went to Helsinki, Finland, as a member of the U. S. team in the Nations Tournament there. During the early part of 1953, I was captain of a team from California which played a number of matches in Europe. In the latter part of 1953, I reported on the Candidates Tournament in Switzerland. I naturally could not resist the temptation of giving blindfold exhibitions. Here are some of these recent games:

8-BOARD EXHIBITION, BRUSSELS—MARCH 28, 1953

PHILIDOR DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	N. N.
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	P–Q3
3. P–Q4	QKt–Q2
4. B–QB4	P–KR3
5. PXP	PXP
6. BXPch	KXB
7. KtXPch	K–B3
8. Q–Q5	Kt–K2
9. Q–B7ch	KXKt
10. B–B4ch	K–Q5

If 10....KXP; 11 Kt–Q2ch and 12 Q–B4 mate follow.

11.	Kt–R3	P–QKt4
12.	Q–K6	

A quiet move that spells "doom!"

12.		K–B4

White announces mate in three.

13.	B–K3ch	K–Kt5
14.	Q–Kt3ch	K–R4
15.	QXKtP mate	

8-BOARD EXHIBITION, ANTWERP—MARCH 30, 1953

ITALIAN OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	N. N.
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	Kt–B3
4. O–O	B–K2
5. P–Q4	PXP
6. P–K5	Kt–KKt1
7. P–B3	P–Q4
8. PXP e.p.	QXP
9. PXP	Kt–B3
10. P–Q5	Kt–K4
11. KtXKt	QXKt
12. R–K1	Q–Q3
13. Q–K2	B–Q2
14. B–KB4	Q–B4
15. P–Q6	Resigns

8-BOARD EXHIBITION, BIRSFELDEN (SWITZERLAND)
OCTOBER 10, 1953

GRUENFELD DEFENSE

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Board No. 5
1. P–QB4	Kt–KB3
2. Kt–QB3	P–KKt3
3. P–Q4	P–Q4
4. PXP	KtXP
5. P–K4	KtXKt
6. PXKt	P–QB4
7. B–QB4	B–Kt2
8. Kt–K2	O–O
9. O–O	Q–B2
10. P–Q5	

Black's move is new and threatened 10....PXP. White might have tried 10 B–Kt3, and after 10....P–B5; 11 B–B2, with a solid game.

10.	P–QR3
11. P–QR4	Kt–Q2
12. P–B4	R–Kt1
13. P–R5	

13 R–Kt1 is much better.

13.	P–QKt4
14. PXP e.p.	KtXP
15. B–R2	B–Kt5

Threatens BXKt and BXBP.

16. B–Q2	KR–Q1
17. P–R3	

Might have considered R–B2 here.

17.	BXKt
18. QXB	Kt–R5
19. Q–B4	R–Kt7

This is a nasty surprise: if 20 B–B1, Kt–Kt3; 21 Q–Q3, P–B5; 22 Q–K3, R–Kt4; 23 B–R3, Kt–R5 and Black has the initiative.

20. QXKt	RXB
21. P–K5	P–KKt4

Well played. If 21....KR–QKt1, there follows: 22 QR–Q1, R(1)–Kt7; 23 RXR, RXR; 24 Q–K8ch, B–B1; 25 QXBPch, KXQ; 26 P–Q6 dis ch, and White wins.

22. QR–Q1

Decides to sacrifice a Pawn to attack and open files.

22.	RXR
23. RXR	PXP
24. P–Q6	PXP
25. PXP	Q–Q2

Not 25....RXP; 26 Q–K8ch, B–B1; 27 RXR, QXR; 28 QXBP ch, and mate next move.

26. QXBP	BXP
27. BXPch	K–R1

If 27....QXB; 28 Q–Kt5ch wins.

28. Q–QB4	B–Kt2

If 28....B–Q5ch; 29 RXB, etc.

29. B–K6	Q–Kt4
30. Q–KR4	Q–Kt3
31. P–Q7	

The goal is attained. The win is now only a matter of time.

31.		**P–B5ch**
32.	**K–R1**	**P–B6**
33.	**B–B5**	**P–KR3**
34.	**Q–K7**	**Q–KB3**
35.	**Q–K8ch**	**Q–B1**

Loses quickly. More chances of holding out longer would have been attained by 35 . . . . B–B1.

36.	**Q–Kt6**	**Q–Kt1**
37.	**R–K1**	Resigns

Nothing can be done against R–K8.

8-BOARD EXHIBITION, SOLOTHURN (SWITZERLAND)
OCTOBER 17, 1953

MAX LANGE

White	*Black*
	Board No. 1 (Consultation)
Koltanowski	
1. **P–K4**	**P–K4**
2. **Kt–KB3**	**Kt–QB3**
3. **B–B4**	**Kt–B3**
4. **O–O**	**B–B4**
5. **P–Q4**	**BXP**
6. **KtXB**	**KtXKt**
7. **P–B4**	**Kt–B3**

A costly mistake! Correct is 7 . . . . P–Q3. Most of Black's moves are now forced.

8.	**BXPch**	**KXB**
9.	**PXP**	**KtXP**
10.	**Q–Q5ch**	**K–B1**
11.	**QXKt**	**P–Q3**
12.	**Q–Kt3**	**K–B2**
13.	**Kt–B3**	**B–K3**
14.	**B–Kt5**	**R–KB1**

14 . . . . P–KR3 immediately is better. White continues in forceful style.

15.	**P–K5**	**PXP**
16.	**QXP**	**P–KR3**
17.	**Kt–K4**	**PXB**
18.	**KtXPch**	**K–Kt1**

18 . . . . K–Kt3; 19 KtXB, R–K1; 20 Q–Kt5ch, etc.

19.	**QXBch**	**K–R1**
20.	**Q–R3ch**	**K–Kt1**
21.	**RXKt**	

That does it!

21.		**Q–Q5ch**
22.	**K–R1**	**RXR**
23.	**Q–R7ch**	**K–B1**
24.	**Q–R8ch**	**K–K2**
25.	**QXPch**	**K–Q3**

If 25 . . . . K–Q1; 26 Kt–K6ch, etc.

26. **QXRch**

Simple and neat. With two Pawns to the good, the game is in the bag.

26.		**QXQ**
27.	**Kt–K4ch**	Resigns

8-BOARD EXHIBITION, PITTSBURGH
MAY 3, 1954

COLLE OPENING

White	*Black*
Koltanowski	N. N.
1. P–Q4	P–Q4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–KB3
3. P–K3	P–K3
4. B–Q3	P–B4
5. P–B3	Kt–B3
6. QKt–Q2	B–K2
7. O–O	O–O
8. PXP	BXP
9. P–K4	Q–B2
10. Q–K2	Kt–K4
11. KtXKt	QXKt
12. Kt–B3	Q–B2
13. P–K5	Kt–Q2
14. BXPch	

The dreaded Bishop-sacrifice!

14.		KXB
15.	Kt–Kt5ch	K–Kt3

Forced. If 15....K–B1; 16 Q–R5, etc.

16.	Q–Q3ch	P–B4
17.	Q–Kt3	QXP
18.	B–B4	Q–K7
19.	Kt–B3ch	K–B3
20.	QR–K1	Q–R3
21.	Q–R4ch	K–Kt3
22.	P–QKt4	P–K4
23.	BXP	B–Q3
24.	Q–Kt5ch	K–B2
25.	QXKtPch	Resigns

Atom Bomb!

I seemed to be one of the few Americans who never had any trouble getting into Oak Ridge, Tennessee. No, I know nothing about physics and even less about atoms. The reason for my ease of entry was that Oak Ridge had developed a fine chess club, one which I have visited several times. This group organized the first Tennessee Championship during the Memorial Day weekend of 1947. Forty players vied for the State title, and I closed the proceedings by playing the 8 highest scorers blindfold on the afternoon of June 1, 1947. The result convinced me that I was not yet ready to retire, for I won 4 and drew 4 against this first-class field.

GIUOCO PIANO

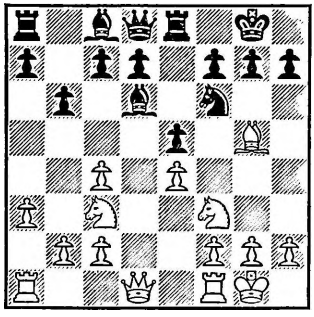
White	*Black*
Koltanowski	Mrs. Mary Hofferbert (Knoxville)
1. P–K4	P–K4
2. Kt–KB3	Kt–QB3
3. B–B4	B–Q3?

"As it was in the beginning..." My opponent must have been frightened by the opposition, for she is a fine player and rarely makes such poor moves.

4.	O–O	Kt–B3
5.	Kt–B3	O–O
6.	P–Q3	Kt–QR4

7.	B–KKt5	KtXB
8.	PXKt	R–K1
9.	P–QR3	P–QKt3

Black's 3rd move has left her with a difficult position. She must either move the B again in order to develop the QB or attempt the fianchetto. Now White gets an idea:



10.	Kt–Q5!	B–K2
11.	KtXKP!	

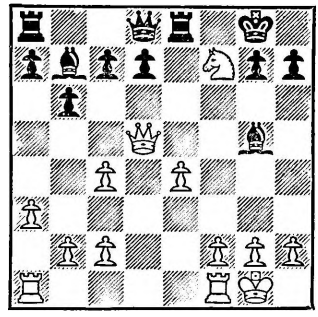
It seems as if Black can win a piece for this P.

11.		KtXKt
12.	QXKt	BXB

Black probably expected 13 QXR, RXKt; 14 P–KB4, R–K1; 15 PXB, QXP, when she would have some slight compensation for the exchange. But White finds the move!

13.	KtXBP!!	B–Kt2

Black must lose something, and hopes it will be this B. But White pulls something out of the history of chess—with the announcement of mate in three.



14.	Kt–R6 dis ch	K–R1
15.	Q–Kt8ch	RXQ
16.	Kt–B7 mate	

Somehow this seems a fitting "end game" for this book—Philidor's Legacy played in the City of Tomorrow. Such are the joys of chess "in the dark"!

There it is. We've just about completed our tour of the world, a tour which has been years in the making and has been so many months in the telling. My wife, grown somewhat tired of the long disappearances of the professional chess player, insists that the tours are over and that Kolty is to stay at home from now on. But she's been saying that for years, and always gives in when a request for an exhibition comes in the mail. A chess master at home is a caged lion—he is happy only when in the field. Somehow, I know that I'll be on my way again soon—probably to your town on my next tour! I'll be seeing you!!